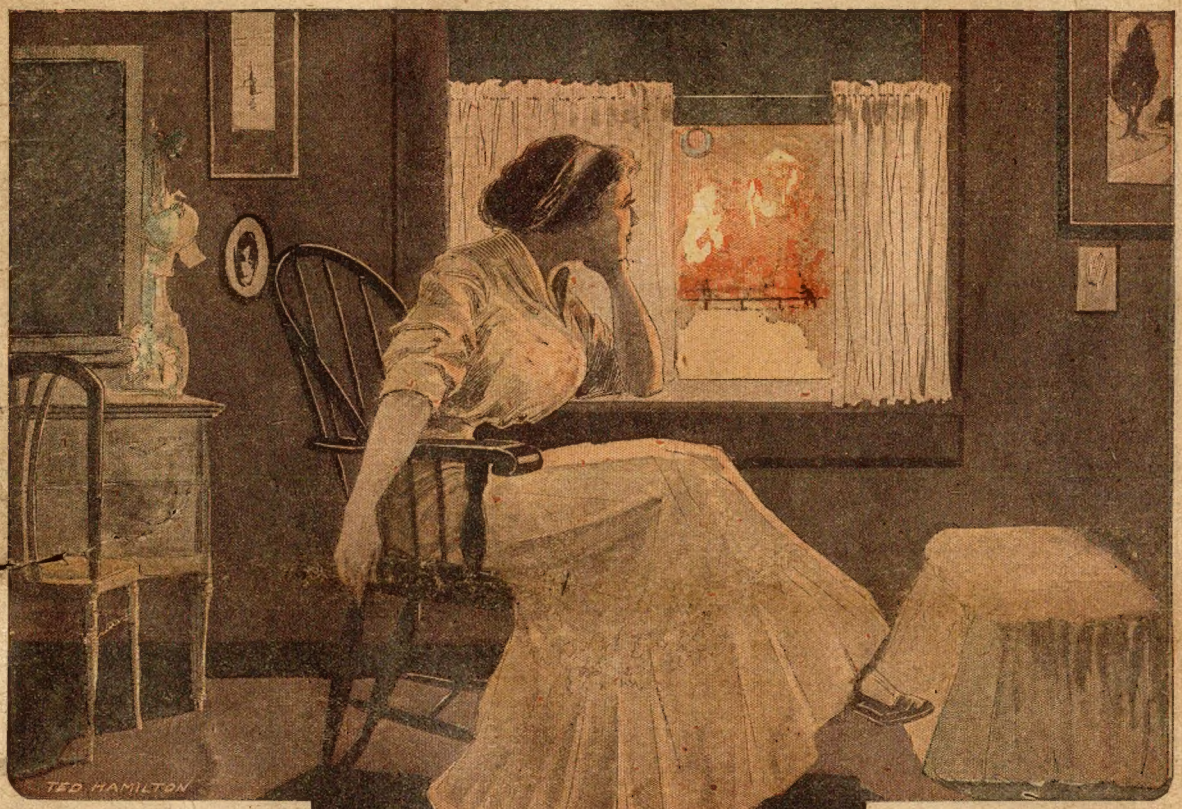
CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XXXIX. NO. 25. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1911. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

The Devil's Lane;

Or, THE KESSLER-GLEASON FEUD

By Mason Ray



All night Myrtle watched at her window.

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MYRTLE KESSLER hung the dishpan on its nail, gave a last critical glance about the spick-and-span kitchen then donned a big sun hat, picked up a bright tin pail and started for the blackberry patch.

"I wonder," she mused, "if he'll be there."

Her murmured conjecture explained the broad blue ribbon on the hat and the freshly ironed blue print gown, good enough for almost any occasion and certainly an extravagance among berry briars. For he might be there and he was Robert Gleason, the son of their neighbor who owned the adjacent farm.

"Perhaps he's waiting now," she thought and into her dark blue pansy-velvet eyes came the light that is "ne'er seen on land or sea." Her sweet red lips curved in a happy smile; her dark piquant face became suffused with the crimson of a rose-leaf.

With quickened steps she crossed a brook-divided meadow. At the far side were two parallel fences that extended from a bit of woods back of the farms to the highway. These fences were exactly four rods apart throughout their length and between them grew a riotous thicket of small trees, bushes and blackberry briars. Far and near people knew of this disorderly patch sandwiched between two well-kept farms. Far and near it was known as the Kessler-Gleason Devil's Lane. And a whole neighborhood was interestedly aware of the twenty-year-old feud that began about boundary lines and ended in a four rod strip of disputed territory. In time the doubly fenced space grew up to noxious brush, the quarrel deepened to bitter enmity and the two families ceased to speak when accident brought them face to face. The children of each household grew to maturity, married, and flitted from their birthplace until there remained but Myrtle Kessler on one side the barrier and Robert Gleason on the other. Then whimsical fate decreed that these two should meet in the Devil's lane and fall in love. Now, Jim Kessler's daughter and Tom Gleason's son made the autumn berrying an excuse to meet again and yet again. They plucked, if not "figs from thistles," at least luscious fruit from the dividing thorns. During the greater part of the year Robert earned excellent wages in a near-by lumber mill, but in summer and autumn the mill lay idle. Therefore idleness and chance brought the two together and the disputed land became their trysting place.

Robert was now waiting under their favorite maple. Near him were heaping pails of the black glossy fruit. He had taken care that their precious interview should not be lessened by toil and had anticipated her coming. The moment he perceived her approach he strode forward with dark eyes glowing and caught her to him. Caresses were showered upon her lips, her eyes, her hair. Words of endearment came in a flood of utterance.

"Hush, Robert, this must end. They'll never let us marry. Never! And it's not right to meet like this. My father would kill us both. Your father would be furious."

"It is right," he argued. "Our love is as innocent as the mating of yonder birds. It's justified by every law of God; and, before the leaves fall from this tree, I swear that you'll be mine by every law of man. Listen to me, dear!"

And as she stood with arms about his neck and head on his broad shoulders he told her of a plan. For a fleeting hour he talked until she caught the fire of his enthusiasm. Then came the lingering farewell, the clinging kisses, the repeated endearments and finally the slow retrospective walk back across the brook-divided meadow to the long, low-built farmhouse.

"You're late, daughter," Mrs. Kessler commented and took the pail of berries from her hand to sort them for the white-spread table.

"I—I didn't know," said the girl flushing, and hastened about the table-setting to escape her mother's curious gaze.

Two days afterward, big lank Jim Kessler strode into his wife's presence and announced an astounding fact.

"Suzanne, somebody's cut all them briars in the lane!" he shouted. "I'll be goll-darned if they hain't all clipped clean's the back o' my hand; all clipped an' piled. What in hell do you s'pose Tom Gleason's up to?"

"Never mind what he's up to," shah advised his portly wife. "That la been a twenty-year disgrace. It's time something was done to it. it go."

He sha'n't set foot on it," raged J Kessler. "If I catch him over the wes fence he'll bite lead. I've guarded that strip with a rifle ever sence Myrtle was born, an' I'm no quitter. I'll show him that I keep my word; and the period's a bullet. Mind that."

At the identical moment Tom Gleason, stiff with rheumatism, florid and angry,

was launching a similar violent threat.

"Jim Kessler's a fool," he stormed. "If he thinks he'll get a claim on that land by clearing it o' nights he's got another guess. And before he's figured it out he'll stop a load o' shot."

Myrtle was terrified. "Give it up, Robert," she entreated when next she saw her lover. "You'll be killed. The Devil's lane is cursed. It's unholy ground."

"Then it must be wiped from the face of the earth," insisted Robert. "The feud must end. We'll manage it yet, never fear."

Before they parted a signal was arranged. A light in Myrtle's bedroom window meant "All's well;" darkness signified "Beware." Therefore the belligerents daily discovered further cause for profane astonishment. Then one night when both farm owners slept profoundly because of a protracted vigilance there occurred a holocaust of tinder-dry brush. The dark vault of heaven was lighted by a score of fires; flames leaped in fiery tongues and lapped up the huge piles of trash. All night Myrtle watched at her window in an agony of apprehension. It seemed impossible that her father and Robert's parents should sleep undisturbed throughout the hours of crackling, heaven-soaring flame and smoke. But the night ended; gray dawn showed the weary, heavy-eyed guard a clear blackened space punctuated by shade trees saved from the fire. Nothing remained of Devil's lane but the parallel wire fence, and thankfully the watcher slept.

At six o'clock Jim Kessler, emerging from the house with milk pails on his arm, saw the transformation and stood transfixed. Across the intervening field Tom Gleason, at the same moment, rubbed the film of sleep from his straining eyes and swore. Then the two aged men rapidly advanced within shouting distance on either side of the cleared strip and hurled verbal missiles of indignation. They shook clenched fists and yelled words of defiance and revenge. Their explosive eloquence being simultaneous held no enlightenment. Neither heard what the other said. Therefore each returned to his wondering wife and accused the other of malicious incendiarism. Each threatened to make violent use of the rusty firearms they had menaced the other with during a score of years. Then both of the angry men were summoned to the county seat to act as jurors at the fall term of Circuit Court. Being impaneled they were obliged to attend no matter how reluctant.

"Every dummed case on the calendar will end in a disagreement," Si Buddington told the village storekeeper and his listener held the end of cord in his back teeth to retort:

"Nobody'll git convicted; an' nobody'll git free."

Mile by mile, house by house, the laugh spread. These two were journeying by different routes to the county courthouse to perform the duties of veniremen, these ancient enemies. Surely their joint presence on a jury would defeat the ends of justice.

But their absence gave Robert the opportunity for which he prayed. During the very hour the belligerents disappeared there came on rollers down the broad highway a four-room bungalow cottage. Robert had purchased the pretty building of Dr. Grigg who was moving to another town. Steadily, surely, by slow degrees a dozen men with teams moved the dwelling opposite the Devil's lane. Then to the amazement of Mrs. Kessler and the observing Mrs. Gleason it was rolled up the lane and planted by the lovers' favorite maple tree. Back of it the distant forest formed a rich blend of autumn tints. At right and left were the russet-hued fields of the two farms. Protectingly about it were the scattered shade trees that Robert had preserved from the fire. Its latticed porch, its wide windows and snow-white paint lent the new home an air of refinement and comfort.

"Mother, it's our home—Robert's and mine." Myrtle's arms were about Mrs. Kessler's neck; her crimson face was hidden. "We love each other dearly. Consent to our marriage and help us end the feud."

"Myrtle, my girlie, I've known this was coming. I've known it and trembled. For your sake I'll do what I can."

And then occurred the next strange happening. Suzanne Kessler put on her bonnet and shawl and visited a dwelling she had not entered for twenty years. Her knock brought to the door a frail woman with remarkably patient brown eyes and sweet, sensitive mouth. There was a moment of bewilderment; then two weeping women were clasped in each other's arms.

"Yes, we'll help furnish their little home. They shall be married in the village this evening. We'll end this serious quarrel," Hannah Gleason agreed after the close of a long talk. And as the others planned it came to pass. Busy hands selected spare articles from overfull rooms. Curtain were hung; the pantry was crowded with stores from the abundance of two farms. Finally a blue-eyed, white-clad bride stood by her lover in the little parlor, and through the services of the Rev. Goodwin became Mrs. Robert Gleason.

Thus it chanced that, later, two irate, disagreeing and disagreeable jurors drove homeward severally and saw the cottage light. Jim Kessler, arriving by the south lane road, beheld the illumined windows and wondered if he were going mad. Speechless with amazement, he climbed from his mud-spattered rig and advanced to the building that had taken up quarters in the Devil's lane. Myrtle, laughing and crying, gloriously happy, but pitifully apprehensive, met him at the door and dragged him within.

"Father, we wanted to be near. We wanted each other and we wanted to end the quarrel. Forgive! This is our home nest—Robert's and mine; we're married." Her cheek was pressed to the roughened face of her astonished parent. Her arms were about him. Her pansy-blue eyes were pleading.

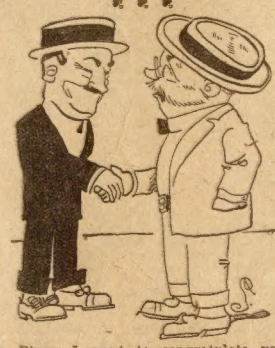
Another step sounded on the veranda. At the door Robert grasped the limp hand of the second juror.

"Welcome, father, to our home," he greeted. "You see I've pre-empted the Devil's lane and turned it into Paradise. This is my wife."

The old men stared at the snowy curtains, the simple furnishings, the familiar faces of their children. They solemnly blinked at the bright light of the parlor lamp then turned bewildered eyes toward each other.

"Well, I'll be goll-darned," said Jim.

"It's jest like bird-nesting," said Tom.



Biggs—I want to congratulate you, old man, on the marriage of your daughter.

Baggs—Thanks, but it was awfully hard to lose her.

Biggs—I'll bet it was. How did she fool her husband, anyway?

An Owl's Odd Trick.

Boys who have tried to "put salt on a bird's tail" generally come to the conclusion that birds can "see behind them," and some may half believe that the heads of these little creatures are hung on pivots. How easily one could conceive such a notion is illustrated by the experience of a Maryland man, who had read a story about an owl's wringing its own neck by looking at a man who was walking around him, says an exchange. The Marylander decided to experiment along these lines, and so procured a fine specimen of an owl and placed him on a post.

It was not difficult for the experimenter to secure the owl's attention for the bird never diverted his gaze from the man while the latter was present. The man began walking rapidly around the post a few feet from it, keeping his eyes fixed upon the bird all the while.

The owl's body remained motionless, but his head turned exactly with the man's movements. When the man was half way around the owl's head was directly behind. Three-quarters of a circle were completed and still the same twist of the neck and the same stare followed the man.

One circle and no change. On the man went, twice around, and still that watchful stare and steady turn of the head. Three times the man went around, and he began to wonder why the owl's head did not drop off, when all at once the man discovered what he had failed to notice before.

When the man reached a distance half way around from the front, which was as far as the owl could turn his head to follow the experimenter's movement with comfort, the owl whisked it back through the whole circle so instantaneously that it brought face to face the man again with such precision, that the latter failed to detect the movement, although he was looking intently all the while at the bird.

The Marylander repeated the experiment many times afterward on the same bird, and he had always to watch carefully to detect the movement of the readjustment of the owl's gaze.

Hard Place to Fill.

New Nurse—Please, mum, I can't do a thing with the baby. He cries all the time.

Mistress—Well, I declare! How stupid of me! His other nurses were colored girls. You'll find some stove polish in the kitchen.

PLAYING GHOST.

If Judge Lester had been a superstitious man he might never have become a judge. It was on Friday that he accepted the nomination; it was on the 13th that he came down with his contribution to the campaign fund; it was on another Friday that the convention nominated him, and it was on the 13th again that the recount of the votes proved that he had actually been elected by a majority of 23 votes.

Again, had the judge been a superstitious man he would have hesitated before buying the manor house known as "The Maples."

Only forty rods down the road stood what had come to be known as "The Ghost House." It had been a fine place in its day, but things had gone wrong and the lawyers and chancery had come to the feast. The house had been abandoned and was in decay.

Farmers without the fear of the law before their eyes had helped themselves to doors and other things, and the small boy had seen to it that not a whole pane of glass was left.

From abandonment to pillage, decay and ghosts is a natural transition. The stories came to the ears of Judge Lester, but made no impression. If there were ghosts he'd have them arrested and brought before him, and on conviction, which was reasonably certain in every case, the sentence would be for not less than three years and four months, and not more than six years and eight months.

When the judge's wife came to hear of the ghosts walking about so near her every night at midnight she shuddered. Not so with the daughter Cally, however. She'd always wanted to see a real ghost, and to shake hands with it if it was a well-behaved one, and here was her opportunity. Perhaps a witch or two would be thrown in for good measure.

His honor went his way without heeding the fact that the number of ghosts seemed to be increasing as summer drew on, while at the same time the number of his chickens was steadily decreasing. On two or three occasions his attention was called to whoops and yells that sounded very human from the ghost house, but he was busy with his law books and did not investigate.

It was Miss Cally who solved the problem. That is, when she was out one morning galloping over the wet grass to get her share of the dew cure, she saw five strapping big tramps leave the Ghost house in single file to scatter over the country and tell the sad story of losing their all in the great Chicago fire.

Their appearance started a train of thought, when her chum, Molly Parsons came up for a month's stay.

"A haunted house? You don't mean it!" replied the visitor.

"Honest Injun!"

"And there are ghosts?"

"No. There are tramps sleeping there nights, which is better for us. We are to be the ghosts, Molly Parsons, you get ready for the time of your life. We are going to scare a dozen Weary Willies most to death!"

"But your father and mother?"

"They are not up to date, dear. In the afternoon we raise a ladder to my window to train the ivy. It is left there. At night we descend and the ghosts walk. We have pillow-cases drawn over our heads, and sheets draped around our bodies, and we glide to and fro and say 'hist!' and 's'death!'"

Three or four nights later the affair came off, but not exactly according to program.

Miss Cally had got the idea that at least five tramps found lodgings in the ghost house every night, whereas there were nights when none sought the place at all. No tramp can ever tell just where he will be when night falls. Important business or the police may detain him.

The idea of the girls were to invade the house in advance of all callers, and they were successful in this. By the help of a candle they found their way in and to a room upstairs, and then sat down on the floor to tremble and shiver and wish they were out of it. It suddenly began to rain, and that didn't add to the cheer of the situation.

No tramps! The only ghostly figures were the two girls, sitting with clasped hands and their backs to the wall. The situation was solemn. It was weird. It was uncanny. There wasn't the least bit of fun in it.

Hist! A step! A swear word! A man enters the open front doors. Mr. George Fenwick, artist, coming up from the city on a late train to the house of his brother, had found the rain and mud too much for him, and had sought shelter.

He batted his wet felt hat against the wall. He scraped his muddy feet on the floor. He swore in a soft and gentle way—not to be wicked, but just to make the weather behave itself.

"He's no tramp!" whispered Miss Cally to her friend.

"No?"

"He's some nice young man. You can tell that by his way of swearing. I wonder if he's heard about the ghosts?"

"S-s-sh! He seems to be listening!"

"I hope he is. I'm going to scare him baldheaded!"

"Cally Lester, if you utter the least sound I'll——"

But the sound was uttered. It was a long-drawn groan—just such a groan as a man who had got stuck while crawling under a corn-crib would utter. The silence downstairs could have been cut with a knife.

Another groan, ending with a wail—such a wail as a strong man utters when he gives up his fight with the mad waves and sinks to the bottom of the tossing sea. Of course, the wail is uttered before he reaches the bottom.

There was the movement of feet downstairs, and then a voice called up:

"Any one up there? If so, don't try any of your tricks on me!"

"O-h-h-h-h-h! M-m-m-m-m-m!" was answered.

This sighing, wailing, groaning, agonizing sound was made by Miss Cally Lester while Miss Molly Parsons was trying to hold a hand over her mouth. Somebody down stairs muttered something about tom cats, and then feet were heard of one ascending. An electric cigar lighter was flashed, a man stood in the door of the room, and two girls gave utterance to shrieks.

"Good evening, ladies! Waiting for the storm to pass, I suppose! Something new in evening costumes, I see. I should be happy to paint you both as you sit there. The wailing and groaning were perfect. Why don't you try it for the phonograph?"

"Sir!" replied Miss Cally as she scrambled up. "We are two girls. We came here to play ghost and scare away tramps. It's just a lark. We are now going home, and—and——"

"No, I won't follow."

"And as you are a gentleman——"

"Not a word to any living soul. You have a candle there. Let me light it for you and show you out."

"Cally, you have arranged all this and led me into it, and now you've got to pay the penalty."

"How?"

"You've got to marry the man we didn't scare!"

Mr. Fenwick has been pretty constant in his calls at "The Maples" for the last year, and it was only the other evening that the judge woke from a nap to say:

"Yes, he'll be asking for an interview with me in a very short time, now."

Overcoming Worry Habit.

Worry, excitement, overstrained grief, emotional shock, remorse, fixed ideas of one kind or another, morbid fears—these are a few of the demons that murder sleep, Samuel McCoach, LL. B., writes in Everybody's. Perhaps the most frequent is worry. The reason why worry has this disastrous power is that it is a disagreeable emotion which keeps the brain cells in a state of unrest. Unfortunately, worry tends to become a habit, a pernicious tendency of the mental mechanism, in which the [illegible] ceases to be master of his thought and becomes its victim. To take one's worries to bed with one is, of course, to render sleep impossible. More than once a victim of the worry habit has said to me:

"I know right well that worry is slowly killing me; that it is all a miserable habit, but try as I may, I cannot conquer it. If only I could stop worrying I would sleep. But how to stop! That is beyond me."

My answer is: "The forces that sustain the worrying habit are unhealthy self-analysis and brooding introspection. The mind, like a machine turned inward upon itself and tearing itself to pieces. If a nervous downfall is to be averted, the mind must be concentrated on some object or purpose that goes beyond the petty, self-centered ends of the sufferer. Nothing so dissipates the phantoms of an undisciplined imagination which cast their gigantic shadows upon life with the world of fact and truth."

Moreover, it is to be noted that the worry habit is the sign, not only of the selfish, but also of the untrustful, temper. It springs out of skeptical, unbelieving, pessimistic attitude toward things in general. The apprehensive, worried soul has no real faith in the good will of the universe. It matters not how orthodox may be the creed which he professes—one's real creeds are those which govern life. Hence the sovereign remedy for worry, and therefore for insomnia which worry creates, is a faith grown of faith. Then enter upon a course of self education by which gradually you compel yourself to act upon what you believe.

An Audience of One.

"Look here," exclaimed young Mr. Cotter Tartar, in desperation, "is this or is it not a wedding tour?"

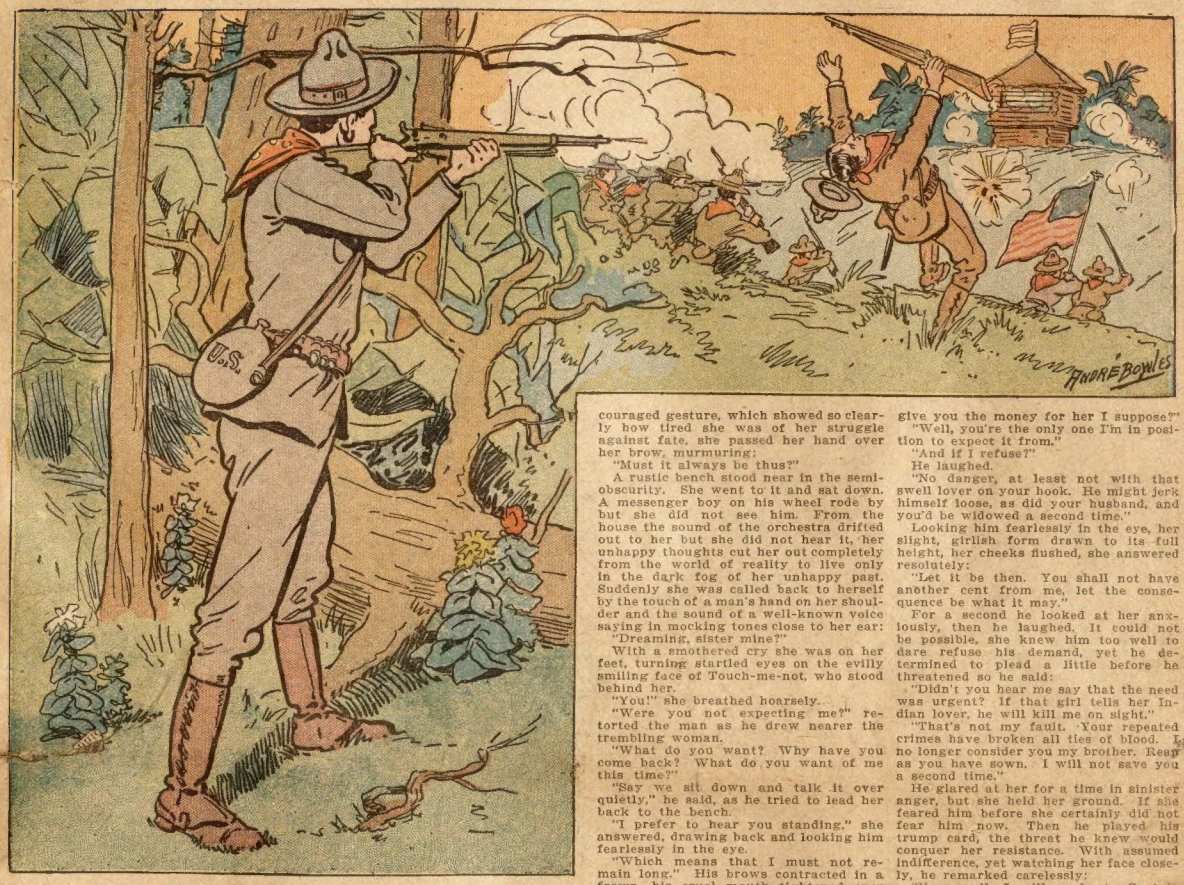
"Why, of course," snapped young Mrs. C. T. "It's our wedding tour. What on earth did you think it was?"

"Well, I'm beginning to think it's a lecture tour. Now cut it out; see?"

The Rough Rider;

Or, FIGHTING HORACE'S SECRET

By Adrienne Roucolle



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Begun in No. 23, June 10. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BROTHER.

COLONEL ROOSEVELT raised his hat when he caught sight of Mrs. Culbert, who bowed in return, then addressing the captain, whose salute he had returned, he said:

"Captain, I may need you later in the evening. General Shafter wants a report about that trouble some of the boys got into yesterday. There is talk of a petition being circulated that the Rough Riders shall not be paid while in Tampa."

Saluting again, Wilbur answered:

"I shall not return to camp without orders, Colonel."

Roosevelt raised his hat once more to the young woman, who still stood in the shadow and with a genial "Thank you" to the captain, walked on with Bates.

"Pretty hard bunch to handle, those Rough, Riders, eh, Colonel?"

Roosevelt laughed as he answered: "That's just what I expect the Spaniards to say before we get through with them." The future fully proved that Colonel Roosevelt had correctly judged his regiment.

For a time after the two men had disappeared, June and Albert remained motionless and silent. June was the first to break the spell with the command given in tones that brooked no refusal:

"Al, I must see that man, tonight—at once!"

"June, I——" began the captain but she cut him short.

"You must. You owe me that much. You are his superior officer, he must obey you. Bring him here without saying who wants him. I want him to repeat to my face what he told you. Go!"

But Wilbur protested: "June, I can't go without saying how sorry I am that my jealousy should have thus gotten the better of my reason."

"Say no more, you had the right to doubt since you are a man, and you can only love me as a man can love, that is selfishly, jealously."

"I never meant to tell you this," he continued, more and more ashamed of himself, as he realized just what he had made her suffer when he was ready to die for her.

"Better tell me than to think it. Don't worry, one blow more or less matters little to one used to suffering."

"June it breaks my heart to hear you talk thus."

With a scornful uplifting of the shoulders and a bitter curve of the mouth, she answered:

"Men's hearts quickly mend when broken. You will recover, have no fear."

"June!"

With a tired gesture she silenced him. "No more protests, please. I thought you different from others, I have made a mistake, let us talk no more about it. Get me that man, it is all I ask."

"June, I swear to trust you. Simply say he lied and I promise never to mention the subject again."

Sadly she shook her head.

"Too late now, you doubted once, you'll doubt again," then abruptly: "Will you get me that man or must I go to him myself? I warn you I am determined to see him this very night."

Deeply hurt, Captain Wilbur answered: "I will get him," and without another word, without a backward glance, he hurried away.

She let him depart, looking after him with unseeing eyes, lost in the dark thoughts of the past, then with a discouraged gesture, which showed so clearly how tired she was of her struggle against fate, she passed her hand over her brow, murmuring:

"Must it always be thus?"

A rustic bench stood near in the semi-obscurity. She went to it and sat down. A messenger boy on his wheel rode by but she did not see him. From the house the sound of the orchestra drifted out to her but she did not hear it, her unhappy thoughts cut her out completely from the world of reality to live only in the dark fog of her unhappy past. Suddenly she was called back to herself by the touch of a man's hand on her shoulder and the sound of a well-known voice saying in mocking tones close to her ear:

"Dreaming, sister mine?"

With a smothered cry she was on her feet, turning startled eyes on the evilly smiling face of Touch-me-not, who stood behind her.

"You!" she breathed hoarsely.

"Were you not expecting me?" retorted the man as he drew nearer the trembling woman.

"What do you want? Why have you come back? What do you want of me this time?"

"Say we sit down and talk it over quietly," he said, as he tried to lead her back to the bench.

"I prefer to hear you standing," she answered, drawing back and looking him fearlessly in the eye.

"Which means that I must not remain long." His brows contracted in a frown, his cruel mouth tightened over his teeth, giving to the dark face such an expression of cruelty that June shivered, yet she bravely answered:

"Yes, hurry. Tell me what you want?"

"I thought you clever enough to guess without asking."

"Money?"

He nodded, then said with a hard, metallic laugh that fell harshly on her ears, "That's what makes the mare go, you know."

"I thought it was understood that you weren't to ask for any more?"

He made a gesture of nonchalant indifference as he answered: "I guess I did promise something of the sort but I shouldn't have done so. The future is so uncertain. I really wish you would take a seat and let me explain the situation."

"I can listen as well standing."

He bit his lip in anger, his eyes narrowed and from beneath the half-closed lids he cast on her a menacing look, yet he answered in even tones:

"The fact is I got a little Indian girl in trouble, back in the territory, and must send her money or she'll peach on me to her former sweetheart, a half-breed Cherokee, whose temper isn't any too good when he's mad. I simply must foot the bills now that she's expecting to be sick. Understand?"

A feeling of disgust and horror surged in the young woman's heart and she could not repress the indignant exclamation: "How can you talk thus lightly of the poor girl's shame?"

"Bah!" and he cast the butt of his burnt out cigarette from him with a careless gesture. "She's only a half-breed, beside haven't I just said I intended to treat her fair?"

"Money, always money! Men think they can pay for a ruined life with gold."

"That's better than letting her scratch for herself at this time. Some men don't even give money, you know."

She looked at him in silent contempt then asked coldly: "You want me to give you the money for her I suppose?"

"Well, you're the only one I'm in position to expect it from."

"And if I refuse?"

He laughed.

"No danger, at least not with that swell lover on your hook. He might jerk himself loose, as did your husband, and you'd be widowed a second time."

Looking him fearlessly in the eye, her slight, girlish form drawn to its full height, her cheeks flushed, she answered resolutely:

"Let it be then. You shall not have another cent from me, let the consequence be what it may."

For a second he looked at her anxiously, then he laughed. It could not be possible, she knew him too well to dare refuse his demand, yet he determined to plead a little before he threatened so he said:

"Didn't you hear me say that the need was urgent? If that girl tells her Indian lover, he will kill me on sight."

"That's not my fault. Your repeated crimes have broken all ties of blood. I no longer consider you my brother. Reap as you have sown. I will not save you a second time."

He glared at her for a time in sinister anger, but she held her ground. If she feared him before she certainly did not fear him now. Then he played his trump card, the threat he knew would conquer her resistance. With assumed indifference, yet watching her face closely, he remarked carelessly:

"Very well, I will apply to Captain Wilbur. He will not refuse me when he knows I'm your brother."

The dart took effect. In a second she lost her calm, her eyes grew large with anguish. Advancing toward the sneering man, she breathed anxiously:

"You will not—you must not!"

Sneeringly, sure of having conquered, he replied: "Do I look like a man who does not carry out his threats?" Then spying Wilbur, who was entering the grounds with Fighting Horace, he added: "Why, if I'm not mistaken, isn't that him coming this way with one of his Rough Riders?"

He took a step toward the slowly advancing men but she, turning and seeing that he was right, leaped forward, barring the way, saying with heaving bosom and flashing eyes:

"If you do that, beware! I will tell him the truth, that you are an escaped convict!"

His face hardened still more, the cruel glint in his eyes deepened as he answered boldly:

"Do so. He'll be the first to advise you to hide the truth. No man likes to be engaged to a convict's sister."

"I'll break the engagement."

"That won't stop the scandal. I'm sure he'll prefer forking up the cash. Shall I ask him?"

He made a movement toward the advancing men. He had seen how in spite of her brave words she was fluttering about in trembling terror, like a bird fascinated by a snake. He knew he had her, but he wanted her to realize the hopelessness of the struggle. His last words won the day. Breathlessly she cried:

"Never! Hide in those shrubs, I will see you later!"

He obeyed, not being any more anxious to meet Captain Wilbur than she was to have them meet. When she saw he had disappeared, she turned once more toward the two men coming toward her,

and, breathless, livid, with a wildly throbbing heart she waited.

CHAPTER XII.

FACE TO FACE.

The two men reached the waiting woman. Fighting Horace, a few feet behind his companion, was not yet in the glow of light coming from the hotel; while June, facing them, was also in the shadow. Wilbur hurried to the young woman, saying as he neared her:

"I have obeyed your order, June," then to Fighting Horace, who had started at the sound of her name: "Horace, this lady wishes to see you."

Eagerly Horace advanced a few steps, anxious to better see the dimly outlined face. As he did so he came within the radius of light, and June, seeing him for the first time, started back as though before a ghost, crying in hoarse, choked tones:

"My husband!"

This cry was answered by another one equally as startled from Captain Wilbur:

"He, your husband?"

Horace alone remained calm, for in answer to Wilbur's exclamation he said simply, yet with a touch of sneering bitterness in his tones:

"It is true, I am Mrs. Culbert's missing husband."

"But you told me——" began the captain, looking from one to the other in bewilderment.

"I told you I was his best friend, so I am." Then, turning to June, who, speechless, almost fainting from the suddenness of the shock, stood looking at him with dilated eyes, he added in icy politeness, "I am sorry, madam, that this meeting should have been forced upon us. Believe me, of my own accord I would never have imposed this hardship upon you."

"Hardship?" the word had the power to call her back to life. "Hardship? when I have longed for this moment for the past five years, when I have prayed for it night and day!"

Coldly he replied: "I don't see why you should since we are strangers."

"Strangers?" a world of misery was expressed in the word, then fiercely she added, "Horace, you know that can never be!"

Pale, his heart tortured with jealousy and apprehension, Captain Wilbur listened, unable to utter a word. Each of June's words, the fire of her eyes, the pallor of her face, the quivering of her form, the impassioned tones of her voice, told him, more plainly than the most brutal avowal, that the young woman's heart still belonged to the husband who had abandoned her. And looking from her to him, he realized with another bitter pang, that in spite of his outward indifference, the man was not insensible to the thrill of the near presence of the beautiful woman who had once been his wife. Still, Horace was answering in slow, measured tones, which failed to betray the tumult within.

"Why not? The best for both of us is to forget the past" he said.

"Can you?"

"I'm trying to."

"And you never tried to learn the truth about that fatal night?" Rebellion, anger and suffering shaded the tones of her voice as she set that question.

He looked her straight in the eye, then bitterly answered her:

"The truth! Why, madam, what more of the truth did you want me to know when I saw you, your arms about another's man's neck, you lips on his, when I heard your words 'Go before he returns,' when I saw you slip a purse in his hand and afterward discovered that you had taken five hundred dollars from me?"

"My God, can this be true?" broke in Captain Wilbur, in heart-breaking agony.

June turned to him, her eyes dark with suffering, her lips quivering, her voice dim with reproach and disappointment.

"You, too, judge from appearance! Neither of you think to ask me who that man was?"

Horace did not give Wilbur time to speak for he answered coldly:

"Why should I want to know his name, since I am not the sort of man who considers it his duty to kill the wrecker of his home. I preferred to leave you."

"Leave me without a word, without giving me a chance to prove my innocence?" she cried in vehement protest, each of his bitter words striking her like the lash of the whip.

"Innocence!" cried Captain Wilbur, with an eager movement toward her, that one word being like a ray of light in the darkness of his despair.

But Horace's hard, contemptuous voice broke in on his rising hopes with the cold question:

"Could you have proved it?"

"Yes," she cried, "that man was my brother."

With a cry, Wilbur hastened to her, a sudden joy on his pale, working face.

"Only your brother!" he cried.

But his joy was short lived, for Horace, placing a detaining hand on his shoulder, said pitilessly:

"Just a minute, Captain Wilbur. When I married Miss Ashley she told me she was alone in the world, she had no living relative."

Wilbur fell back, the moment of hope he had just experienced causing his present suffering to be the greater, the deeper. This woman he so loved was indeed false, hopelessly so!

Looking from one to the other of the two men, June read the same verdict on both faces; they did not credit her words. She wrung her hands. "You do not believe me?"

"You really did not expect me to do so?" answered Horace.

"And you, Al?" she pleaded, turning to Wilbur. He hung his head unable to answer. She understood. With a wail of agony she cried: "What can I say to prove I tell the truth?"

"You might tell us why you never mentioned having a brother until called upon to prove a doubtful innocence," answered Horace, the captain being unable to utter a word.

She brought her hands to her head in a half-mad gesture, as she murmured hoarsely: "Must I tell you?"

"I would advise it; that is if you wish any reasoning man to credit your assertion."

She looked at her former husband for a second, then with sudden resolution, unwilling to longer support the contempt of his eyes, she exclaimed:

"Well, know it then, both of you! I never mentioned my brother—because—" she paused, looked piteously around her, hoping that one of the two men would tell her he trusted her without hearing the avowal, but neither spoke, so she finished brokenly, "because he was a murderer! Because at the time of my marriage he was serving a life's sentence in the State prison of California."

"Impossible!" broke from Wilbur.

"Just what I say," remarked Horace. "Where are the proofs?"

She looked at him, wild eyed.

"Proofs! Do you expect me to give proofs?"

"I fear so." Horace was pitiless. It was easy to guess from the very heartlessness of his present conduct how truly, how deeply he had loved this woman, whom he thought so false and depraved.

For the space of a second June hesitated, then with sudden resolution: "You shall have them!" She took two steps toward the bushes behind which Touch-me-not was concealed, then pausing, she turned anew to them. "First promise, both of you, never to betray my brother, if I reveal his real identity to you."

Suprised, uneasy, Horace answered: "I promise."

"And you?" to the captain.

"You have my word."

She hurried to Philip's hiding place. He was still there, not having lost one word of the conversation. Nervously she pulled him into the open, then in hurried, breathless tones, ordered:

"Defend me, coward! Tell them who and what you are!"

With his usual easy swagger Touch-me-not advanced toward the two men, who did not at first recognize him. Sneeringly he remarked:

"I was just going to do so."

"Touch-me-not!" cried Wilbur, as the man's face came into the light and the sound of the well-known voice struck the air.

"You, her brother?" broke from Horace at the same time.

"Yes," and Philip swung from side to side in a mocking way, "and I discover with astonishment that we are relatives! You threw me out of your garden with such haste at the time of our first meeting that I naturally did not take time to examine your features."

"You were with her that night?"

"To be sure. I can easily prove it by stating that the little scene between us took place near the old oak tree, with the circular bench, at the back of the garden. Remember?"

Horace's pallor was so intense that one would have thought he was about to faint, for those words vividly recalled to him the tragedy in which his life's happiness had been wrecked. Touch-me-not continued:

"You see I had just escaped from prison and was somewhat short in cash, so I naturally turned for assistance to my beloved sister, my only living relative."

"Would to God, I could believe that!" broke from Horace.

June advanced a few steps nearer, her eyes fixed on his, then solemnly she affirmed:

"Horace, on my hope of Heaven, I swear it is the truth!"

He believed her. A flood of boundless happiness surged through his heart to be changed the next minute into the deepest despair, for in realizing that she was still worthy of his love, he realized also that he had lost her forever. Hoarsely he stammered:

"Why did you not tell me of this before our marriage?"

"Because I loved you," she admitted. "I feared to lose you should you know I was a convict's sister. I could not give you up so I remained silent. Afterward, when you thought me false, I would have spoken but you did not give me the chance, leaving me with only that farewell note."

"How could I guess?"

"You should have trusted, both of you."

Captain Wilbur had listened in miserable silence, realizing with each of her words that his dream of happiness was vanishing in the reality of her love for her former husband. He knew without being told that June still loved Horace, yet he said, trying to hope in spite of evidence:

"Can you ever forgive my doubting you?"

"I forgive, but we must part," she replied slowly but resolutely.

He made a movement toward her but she stopped him with an imperative gesture as she continued:

"I do not expect you to marry a convict's sister. You wanted to know my secret, you know it now, but this knowledge parts us forever. Leave me and forget."

"June this is impossible!" he cried, forgetful of the two listeners, thinking only that he was about to lose her. "The engagement must continue! What do I care what your brother was or is? What I want, what I love, is you!"

"Impossible, I can now belong to no one!"

Philip here felt he must intervene. For special reasons he hated his sister's husband, and, though he had no special liking for the young captain, he was glad of making his enemy suffer, for it was easy to see by the working of Horace's face that he was enduring the most excruciating torture.

"Don't be a fool!" he said roughly. "Take him, I'll rid you of the other!"

"What do you mean?"

"What I said, of course. I will get him out of your way as soon as the war is over, if the Spaniards don't get him before."

"You would kill him?" The girl's eyes were large with a nameless dread.

"It has long been my intention," hissed her brother.

June would have protested but Horace, advancing, said:

"Have no fear, a Spanish bullet will save him the trouble. We have taken the oath not to fight until the war is over."

From the hotel some one was calling Wilbur. The young man turned. The brightly lit veranda was now crowded with chattering groups, through which waiters with trays of glasses were passing and repassing. All were about to drink a toast, and they were calling the young man to join.

"Just a minute Colonel," he answered, then, to June, he pleaded: "I implore you, give me the chance to win you back!"

She shook her head sadly. "Too late, there can be no winning me back. They are waiting for you, you had better go."

He hesitated, but the look in the deep, sad eyes told him that there was no hope. He had lost her. With a gesture of utter despair he turned, and with bowed head and a bleeding heart, he left her.

But June was not thinking of his suffering; her brother's words were yet ringing in her ears. He wanted to kill Horace! Her emotion, the overpowering agony this threat caused her, showed her that she still loved the man who had broken her heart, loved him more than ever. His life must be spared, the fight to which both had alluded must never take place. Standing between the two, looking from the dark, evil face of the one to the strong manly face of the other, she said:

"You must swear both of you never to fight each other."

Philip only laughed but Horace answered:

"I can not swear, for a previous oath binds me to your brother's wishes. I have promised that after the war, if both are living, I will consent to play my life against his."

"Philip, you will not demand it of him? Promise me you will not!"

"That's my affair," retorted Philip, then turning on his heel he was gone before she could detain him.

From the hotel veranda came a strong, manly voice, saying, as all the officers assembled there raised their glasses:

"To the officers: may the war last until each is killed, wounded or promoted!"

June turned. In the blaze of light, his glass held high, his face white and haggard, Captain Wilbur was drinking with the rest. She shivered. Something told her that the young man in his heart was drinking to his coming death, the only solution to the misery of his life.

Horace had also heard the toast, but to him it had another message. He felt he had too deeply wronged this woman to dare to sue for her pardon, so, drawing near, he said in low, tense tones which brought to the girl's yearning heart a thrill of joy and despair combined:

"May it last until by my death on the battlefield I may have won the pardon which, living, I dare not ask. Goodby forever!"

He raised his hat, and though he read the mute prayer of her misty eyes, he felt he had not the right to again run the risk of breaking her heart, so, with a bow of renunciation, he turned and walked away. June felt a mad impulse to rush after him and call him back, but pride sealed her lips. If he did not care enough for her to seek his pardon, why should she offer it? Thus did the two who loved and longed for each other, part, each with the thought that it would be forever.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAN JUAN HILL.

The war was on, and the troops, massed before San Juan Hill were awaiting orders to start the attack. Roosevelt's regiment, the Rough Riders, were lying on their stomachs in the bushes at the foot of the hill, and were forced to weather without an answering shot, the fire of the enemy. And still no orders to advance. A number of men were wounded, some dead. A feeling of unrest prevailed among the men, their nerves were strung to the highest point of tension. Something had to be done, and Roosevelt was the man to do it.

Colorado Joe had been seriously wounded, yet he refused to leave the battle field. Fighting Horace, himself suffering from a slight scalp wound which had caused him to [illegible] his handkerchief about his head to keep the [illegible] from his eyes, was supporting the young cowboy while making him drink out of his canteen. When he saw that the young man had sufficiently revived, Horace said:

"Now Colorado, see if you have enough strength to make your way to the rear before the fighting is resumed."

"Never!" cried the boy vehemently. "I want to fight!"

"You can't fight, Joe, your wound is too serious."

"I'm not a woman!" and bravely he gritted his teeth to choke back in his throat a groan of pain.

"I know you are a brave man but, in spite of your courage, you are human and must bow to physical laws."

Colorado Joe drew himself away and staggered to his feet: "I'll show you if I must!"

He lifted his hat and tried to wave it in the air, crying: "Hurrah for Uncle Sam!" but his strength failed him, he staggered blindly forward and dropped on his knees, his face white and working. Horace hurried to him.

"Now are you convinced?"

Half sobbing with rage and disappointment, Colorado Joe cried:

"I want to fight!"

A volley from the blockhouse on the hill cut the conversation short as shot and shell fell around them, killing a man at their side and calling forth from the inactive soldiers curses of powerless rage. They did not fear death but they wanted to die fighting. After the noise ceased, Horace answered Colorado Joe's last remark:

"You see that you can't fight, so be brave and give up the struggle. You must go to the rear that you may live to lead in another struggle. We can't be long before starting the attack."

Colorado Joe rebelled for a time, then realizing how useless he would be in the fight, he sadly worked his way to the rear, rebellious despair and rage in his heart. He would have preferred death to this enforced idleness.

While this was happening in the bushes, Captain Wilbur, standing near a tall palm, was looking with his field glasses, trying to locate exactly from whence came the murderous shots which mowed down his men. The Spaniards, using smokeless power, were hard to locate. Wilbur, since the breaking of his engagement and the opening of the war,

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had sought death at every opportunity. He knew now that June had never really loved him, her whole heart and soul being still with the love of the past. Without her love life was no longer worth living. Today, a sort of morbid presentiment seemed to tell him that his longing for death would be answered, and he looked toward the blockhouse, wondering when and where the welcome bullet would bring him rest. Sensitive to the extreme, feeling everything deeply, he was not the man who could bear the wreck of his one love dream. Suddenly he was called back to himself by Roosevelt's voice saying close to him:

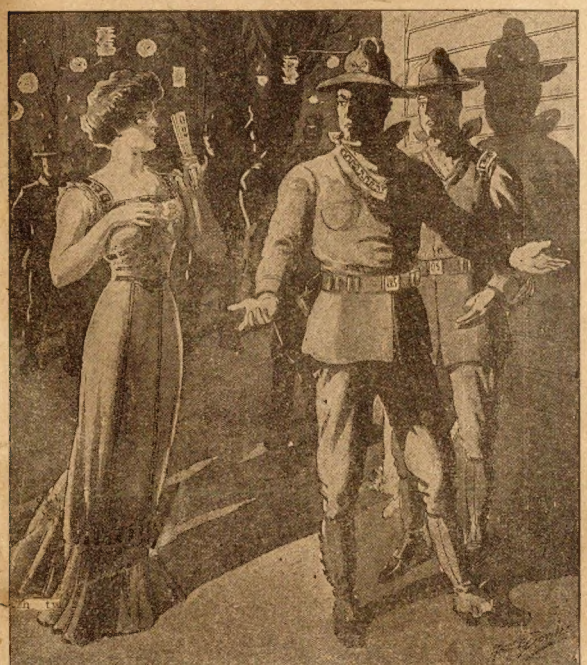
"Have your men ready, Captain, we're going to make the assault!"

Saluting, Wilbur replied as the Colonel hurried away: "Very well, Colonel."

He tried to hurry forward when he felt himself held back by his coat sleeve. He turned, surprised, and saw the blanched terror-stricken face of his man Corley.

"Please, massah," pleaded the black youth, "I want to go home!"

"Don't bother me," answered Wilbur,



"That man was my brother!"

as he tried to shake himself loose from the other's convulsive hold.

"But massah, I tell you there's too much shooting around here! I want to go back to San Antonio!" pleaded George Washington as he clung desperately to the captain's arm.

"Corley, be a man!" retorted Wilbur impatiently, as he again tried to take a step forward.

Corley, his teeth chattering, his eyes rolling in terror, replied: "I'm a man all right, massah, but I don't want to be an angel, sah."

With an oath Wilbur pushed the negro aside and hurried forward to his men, giving orders, inspecting the ranks. As though the enemy suspected something of what was going on in the bushes, a volley of shot and shell broke in on the momentary hush, filling the air with noise and death. George, with a yell of terror fell to his knees, his face touching the ground. After a second, he looked up, felt himself, then murmured in thankful surprise as he rose once more to his feet:

"I'm not dead, praise de Lord!"

He turned tremblingly to make his way to the rear when he found himself face to face with Touch-me-not. Since the meeting with his sister and the scene which had followed, Philip Ashley had become more sullen, more vicious than ever. In his revengeful heart he was nursing a plan, a plan of revenge both on his sister and on his enemy, for he too had guessed that June still loved her husband. Seeing Corley, Philip made a movement of impatience. The man was in his way.

"Go to the front, niggar!" he ordered roughly.

"I's far enough front, sah! I want to go back!" pleaded the colored boy as he tried to pass the bully.

"No, you don't," snarled Philip.

"There's too much shooting here, massah!"

Leveling his gun on the trembling Corley, Touch-me-not replied: "There'll be still more in a minute if you don't go to the front. Go, join Captain Wilbur, or I shoot!"

"Don't shoot, sah! What have I done that you want me to die?"

"We have no use for cowards in Uncle Sam's army."

"I'm not a soldier, sah, I'm only a servant. It ain't my trade to get killed."

"Trade or not, killed you'll be if you don't obey me! Shall I fire or will you go?"

Corley understood the man was in earnest, and with a yell of terror he made off toward the front, calling as he ran: "Save me, save me!"

Philip watched him with a smile of contempt. Whatever he might be he certainly was not a coward, and the sight of this abject terror filled him with scorn. At this moment Blackrock dashed up.

"Where's Captain Wilbur?" he asked hurriedly.

"In the bushes. See him over there," and as Blackrock was hurrying away: "What's up?"

"Orders to the front," answered the half breed without turning around.

The sound of that voice and the spoken words caused several Rough Riders to rise to a sitting position and look after the vanishing messenger. Philip, who was looking in that direction, gave a start, while his hand clutched convulsively his gun and his small eyes flashed fire. One of the men who had risen was Fighting Horace, his enemy. There, within range of his gun! A quiver passed over the man's body, his muscles became tense, his face set. What he had waited for so long had come at last, vengeance was within his clasp. The minute Fighting Horace would appear in the open space at the foot of the hill, he would fall dead, shot through the heart. In the joy of the thought Philip's hand trembled! The bugles blew, the charge began. Horace was one of the first to rush from under cover. The batteries from the blockhouse came immediately into play, while a treacherous shot from behind caused Fighting Horace to stagger forward, and, after a few wavering footsteps, to drop on his knees. Captain Wilbur, who stood by his side, saw him fall, with an unreasoned movement he paused, bending over the wounded man.

The continuation of this fascinating story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

Lion Hunting.

That all lion hunters are not as fortunate as was Mr. Roosevelt is indicated by the East African Standard, which describes the fatal mauling received by the brother of Sir Edward Grey, the British foreign secretary: "Mr. Grey, seeing the game, put his horse to the gallop and practically started to course the brutes. His companions were immediately alarmed at his foolish temerity and endeavored to warn him of the terrible danger he was courting. They were doubly alarmed at seeing one of the lions preparing to charge. Mr. Hill thereupon dismounted and fired a quick shot at the biggest lion in the hope of attracting his attention from Mr. Grey. The bullet unluckily fell short and the lion charged Mr. Grey, who jumped off his pony and awaited the onslaught. At about twenty yards he fired and the shot went into the lion's shoulder, but without stopping the beasts's deadly charge. He got in another shot at about five yards, hitting the brute in the mouth, breaking two of his murderous fangs and injuring his jaw.

"The lion flung his victim to the ground and commenced to worry him, as a dog would a mouse. Meanwhile Mr. Pease had followed Mr. Grey and the party waved him to come up on the flank; they then covered the 300 yards between them and the lion and his victim at top speed. When some fifty yards off the lion noticed his fresh antagonists and ceased to maul Mr. Grey. At twenty-five yards the party dismounted and ran in. The beast immediately made toward them and at this awful moment of peril Mr. Hill's rifle jammed and he, too, was out of action. Almost simultaneously Sir Alfred and Mr. Pease fired and the balls entered the lion's ribs. The animal then returned to his victim.

"The horrified relief party scarcely remember what happened during the next brief moments further than that the lion was on top of Mr. Grey, and animal and man were so mixed up that it was most difficult to distinguish the former's head from the latter's body, in order to get in a deadly head shot, which was found impossible to place until the lion was almost lifeless.

"During the deadly fray the other lion was distant only about 100 yards, growling and lashing his tail. After being rescued Mr. Grey was perfectly collected and quietly instructed his anxious friends how they could best handle his lacerated body."

Champion Letter Writer.

"Now that the graduatin' season's comin' on," said the old man, "we git a letter from John every day—purty nigh. Ef he larn't nuthin' else in that college he shore got ten mile ahead o' the whole class in the letter-writin' line. At first he writ mostly in Greek, with a yard o' two o' Latin throwed in fer good measure; but now it's all plain American, so's the home-folks kin make no mistake. The upshot of it all it—he don't want the money question to be Greek to us. When he wants to give a supper to the boys, Latin is too long an' Greek is too misleadin'. It's always: 'Dear Dad: Fifty dollars—please.' An' when he wants to draw on me fer a ortermobile, or a airship, ketch him turnin' a somersault in French. No, sir-ree! He knows more home-dialect then than you could plow out of a ten-acre field on six June days. Whilst I'm a-drinkin simmon beer an' cider he makes bold to tell me that he's a-drinkin' health an' long life to me in champagne. 'I don't like to put the expense of it on you, ol' man,' he says, 'but the family record must be kept up. So I have the pleasure of drawin' on you once more; but I shan't have to draw ag'in till day after tomorrow.'

It's mighty reg'lar business, but I try to be as cheerful as possible under the circumstances, an' slap a mortgage on another mule, an' let him draw away. He's goin' to be a lawyer, an', of course, when his time is out he'll look into the mule-mortgages an' find so many flaws in 'em the jedg'll throw 'em out o' court, an' I'll not go broke. But it does seem ard to be plowin' in dialect whilst he's playin' leapfrog with Latin an' sayin' grace in Greek.

"Here comes the sheriff now, an' I'm a-goin' to let myself down in the well. There's nuthin' like keepin' cool when folks are rearin' 'round, excited!"

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or A Doctor's Mystic Power

By ALVAH MILTON KERR.

Begun in No. 16, April 22. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XXXV.—Continued.

In THE first moment she did not know me; for suffering and hardship had no doubt changed me greatly, and she drew back frightened and staring, then with a sharp gasp of breath, and a little quivering cry, she sank against the gate and weakly put her hand over toward me, a great pity and troubled gladness in her eyes.

I took her slim, trembling hand in both my own, hoving it a moment between my sun-burned fists as a miser might so much precious gold, and looking down upon her with a great yearning of heart and wish to cry out in pity of her, for she looked so pale and worn and thin it hurt me to the soul. I knew not what to say, nor seemed any words able to leave her lips for a little space, so strange was our plight, with love thus plainly welling up between us and mingling with the cold consciousness of what I was.

"I—I have come back, Marguerite, to—tell you everything," I said, stumblingly. "I have sinned, I have done you a great wrong, but I am not—not wholly what I seem to those who have accused me."

She clung a little to my fingers at that, her tearful eyes searching my features hungrily, then her face fell and she stood trembling, the tears dropping to her fast-heaving bosom.

"Can I tell you now? Can you bear it, Marguerite?" I asked.

She waited a little. "Will you come in?" she half whispered at last.

I fastened the horse to the hitching-post and went in through the gate. The girl had gone down a side path toward that arbor which stood near the west end of the garden—that bamboo shed walled with climbing-rose, the eave of sweets in which Dr. Stanwood used to lie and smoke and read the lore of India. As I went through the garden old memories moved me strongly. There was a lingering glow in the west, a clear, green-blue sky overhead, into which stars were issuing silently; a perfume that was like a familiar voice rising from the flowers, and noises here and there about the place that I seemed to hear out of childhood; negro laughter, mellow African gabble, the barking of a dog back by the stables, the distant neighing of a horse, and some one singing out in the pastures, the song following cow-bells that beat a dreamy, increasing music as they came toward the barns.

We sat down upon a rustic bench that stood before the arbor, the girl laying her thin hands upon each other in her lap and looking out before her, yet seeming to see nothing. I waited, scuffing the graveled walk with my foot, and looking down at the moist, disordered spot. There seemed no word with which I could begin.

"Marguerite," I said at last, and stopped. She turned her pained eyes to my face. "You must forgive me for using your name so," I said, "but it has spoken itself in my mind ten thousand times since I last saw you; it seems more familiar to me than my own name."

A kind of color went over her face at that, and she stirred and looked outward again.

"It cannot possibly be as hard, I think, for you to hear what I have to say, Marguerite, as it is for me to utter it," I went on. "I ask, but I do not and should not expect, your forgiveness, I know; but I never thought to bring this disaster, and God knows it would never have fallen had I been treated humanly and like a son. That is the secret spring, Marguerite, from which has welled up all the bitterness that has overwhelmed us. It began away back, back of my recollection even, in something I cannot comprehend and that now I would give a year of life to understand. Dr. Stanwood—I will not call him my father, for it has come to light that he was not that, save in appearance—Dr. Stanwood was never kind to me. There was always bitterness between us. From the hour in which he first beat me, just there where the great cactus now springs, our souls fought when our hands did not, for in my heart of hearts I denied his parental right to hate and abuse me. I understand that part of it, now; his very life and presence was an outrage which nature in me instinctively resented. It must have been so, for up to that hour of which I am most reluctant to speak, I had contention with or pronounced dislike for no other man."

Her face was turned toward me now, a look of wonder, expectation and anxiety upon it that changed her painfully. "Why need you tell me all of it?" she cried tremblingly, reaching her shaking hands toward me. "Oh, tell me—tell me that you did not take his life! that his blood is not upon you!"

"I have no wish to spare myself," I said, "but I did not kill him. We quarreled and I injured him fearfully. It happened upon the bridge, and he fell to the water and must have floated away, though I tried to find and save him. He was carried, somehow, to an island out in the gulf. He lies buried there."

She watched my face until I ceased to speak, and yet a moment longer, then with a strange, low cry fell toward me along the bench and lay sobbing upon her arms. I put my hands upon her head and tried to speak, but I could not, neither could I see her for the tears that were in my eyes.

We sat thus for many minutes, while her heart, as a woman's heart will, healed itself a little with weeping. At last she lifted her face, but did not look at me. "Then they will release you—they will not—they will not—Oh, it was so hard for me! They told me it must be done—that the State must—Oh, I could not believe you guilty! I could not! I could not! For weeks and weeks now I have been insane, I think! Oh, God pity me, how I have suffered! But now they will let you be? They will let you go—"

She had her hand pressed upon her laboring bosom, and a wild, beseeching anxiety shone in her wet eyes as she turned to me. Then I knew that this girl, whatever the reason of her marriage, had never loved her husband. A sense of relief fled over me like a warm wave.

"But I struck him first." I said. "Only for my rashness he would now be alive!"

She gazed at me, groping after help. "You must—you must have had cause," she pleaded. "You could not have done him violence without. Oh, spare yourself a little! Spare me! Tell me the truth!"

"Truly, it was a hard thing to bear that he denied me knowledge of my mother's death," I said. "And when he told me, and saw that the blow crushed me, he sneered at my grief and said a thing that cut me to the heart. I struck him then. In the end he would have killed me only that I got the pistol from him. But I should not have used it; I should have shown nothing. I was maddened half-stunned with the fight. I cannot tell rightly now if I intended his death in that last moment or not—it is not clear to me; nor can I tell if I discharged the pistol or if his blow, delivered at the moment, caused it to explode. I only know that I have felt myself to blame, and have suffered all the remorse that may ever come to one who takes a human life."

She looked at me pityingly, a mingled horror of the thing and its result struggling with her sympathy. "Yes, but his was the first blow," she said, after a little pause. "One may strike the heart and mind as well as the face; the first brings the last, and it is no better. He gave the first wound, you gave the last. Had he done right it never would have happened."

Her excusing words were sweet to me, and yet I felt a kind of pain and amazement in hearing them. Coming from her, from this slim, beautiful girl-widow, there seemed a sort of disloyalty in it, a cruelty for the dead. And yet I knew that she was trying to be just, that she was just, in fact, but I could have borne it better, I think, had she upbraided me.

I hesitated for a little time: I could not let it rest so. "Yes, but I thought that he was my father then," I said, "and though he seemed as strong a man as lived, I should have remembered that he bore more than twice my number of years. I should not have returned evil for evil. It was wrong; to believe that, only look at the result! I shall sorrow for it always."

She arose and came near me and stood looking down. I saw that her fingers still trembled and that her bosom labored yet, though not so wildly. "You may think of me as you will," she said, "but I have a woman's heart; it is not as yours. I have not excused you wholly, but I strive to, because—because I pity you and am sorry. You may think me unnatural and wanting in just resentment of my loss; you may find my weakness a kind of perfidy to—to him, but you do not know all. It is not clear to me even, for I do not and I did not love him in the natural way. He made me helpless against my will—there was something—I do not know—I was tied with invisible cords, it seemed. They broke when you came, and I was free to see and to feel as I once did. When he went away I woke and saw myself, and you cannot know how I have suffered, looking back to what I had been, to what I had done! And others must have suffered, too! Oh, sir, he did me a great wrong, a great injury, for I was little more than a child, and had so little knowledge!"

I reached out and took her hands and held them. She stood crying silently. I longed to comfort her, but wanted fitting words. A great resentment burned in my heart, and with it all regret for my deed died out of me. Surely, from all that I had seen and now suspected, this man of whom we spoke had no rightful claim to life!

"I have tried to grieve for him," she said brokenly, "but I could not; I cannot now. I was dreaming, or led by an illusion which he must have cast upon my mind; I know not what; only this I know, having lost myself to him against reason and my will, it was a wicked thing and brought about by wicked means. I have left him with God. All my prayers have been for you."

Her tears, for I could never bear the sight of them in the eyes of any creature, and her tone and those last words melted me down, being weak and broken with trouble, and I laid my face upon her hands, in mine, and let my tears run until my heart lost its weight and soreness and came full of peace.

After that, I got to my feet and she

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put her light hand upon my arm and we went toward the house in silence. How could we talk of love now, upon the very heels of death and her widowhood? How could I ever claim her as mine, indeed, seeing the manner and means of my coming into her love and favor? I remember that little walk clearly. The moon was not yet risen, but the stars were many and large in the green-blue welkin, and a pearly gray light lay along the walks and over the flowers. Out over the meadows a nighthawk fell from the sky with a humming s-u-r-r of sound, and faint noises came from here and there along the valley, and a whisper from the distant swamp and sea. I craved nothing further for the hour—only her light hand upon my arm, and the great calm and peace that had fallen upon me.

When we came to the door she looked up to my face. "And now they will let you go? The law will not harm you now?" she asked.

I looked down to her anxious eyes and tried to smile assuringly. "I think they will drop the matter," I said. "There is more bearing that way of which I have not told you. And yet I am not a lawyer; I cannot say surely."

Her fingers tightened upon my arm a little, and her eyes dwelt upon my face for a moment anxiously, then we went in.

The house was aglow from the lamps. Through the open doors I saw Sam, the young colored man, and Abbie, the mulatto serving-maid, both in white aprons bustling about. Marguerite went into the diningroom and I heard her say: "Sam, will you please find Uncle Peter and tell him that Mr. Stanwood's horse is at the gate? Abbie, you may clear the table. Put on a fresh cloth and the Dresden cups and plates."

I saw the black couple stop and look toward the reception hall, their eyes white and wide. Marguerite made my room ready with her own hands. At the evening meal we talked for the most part of common things; of the late moods of earth and sky—in other words, the weather, which fortunately is infinite in its variety and opportunities of conversation; of Uncle Peter's management of the place, of the lack of good roads in the vicinity, and how three hives of bees had swarmed and gone off to the forest; of everything in fact for which we cared not two straws, but never once of the mystery that hung over us, the dangers that lay before us, or that deep, beautiful something which made every look and the falling of every word, however common, between us, a rich, new thing.

When we had made an end of the meal, I went out and walked about the gardens, but presently remembering the written matter in the library, and being curious to see it again, I crossed the eastern porch and went in at the side door. I found Marguerite in the north drawingroom, and having some choice roses in my hand, I gave them to her. Though flowers at Magnolia House were as plentiful as leaves, she took them with two little words of gratitude, spoken so softly, and with such a glance out of her starry eyes, and such a tender color mounting into her cheeks, I stood a moment gazing upon her beauty, forgetful of everything but that and the summer of pleasure in my veins.

She was dressed in a kind of light stuff that became her wonderfully, and she smelled the roses and fastened them upon her bosom, where their pink heads nestled, falling over a little shore of creamy lace to lay their petals against the base of her round, white throat. She herself was like a kind of rare, slender flower, and I longed to take her to my heart and kiss her.

Perhaps she saw the hunger in my eyes, for she drew away with a face that was all light and color. "Won't you come into the music room?" she said, plainly to put me off and cover her confusion.

I went willingly indeed, and sat down upon a divan and watched her. She moved about a little, talking and arranging things, then seated herself at the harp and began running her fingers over its strings very softly. The girl and the golden instrument made a beauteous picture, and the music, than which I have heard none more silvery, sweet and touching, after so much pain and bitter striving, stirred emotion in me so that my heart and throat ached with pleasure before she had finished. And she herself, at the end, laid her face against the golden curve of the harp a moment, and, though she looked up brightly, tears were in her eyes. We were as two children.

When she lifted her head, she shook back the bright clusters of hair from her face and came and sat not far from me on the divan.

"You will play no more?" I queried.

"Not now, please; it makes you sad," she said, and dashed the tears away from her eyes, and we both laughed.

"It is the same music that I heard that night when I came home," I said. "I heard you playing when I came and sat on the edge of the gallery, and, for the first time since I was a child, my eyes ran over that night. I have been a booby, for crying, ever since!"

We laughed again, though we were on the verge of tears. "I think it is sweet to cry," she said, looking up at the glowing chandelier with brimming eyes, "especially when one is happy. I cried with trouble and loneliness so many times since you went—since then. Now everything is changed, and still I can't forget the habit!"

"It is a habit man, woman or child need not be ashamed of," I said. "It is proof positive that there is a heart within the person, at least. Those so cold that nothing may ever touch them to tears are—well, like Shakespeare's idea of the soul that goes unmoved of music: I fancy they are fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils. We will say so, anyway, in extenuation of our weakness!"

We laughed, and I put my hand between us on the divan, and her's nestled in it and clung there. As we talked I suddenly thought of the wound she had given herself that memorable evening in the swamp, and lifted her slim white

As the door opened, I crushed the first man that followed.

arm from its flowing lace and looked at it.

"Ah, it healed finely! There is scarcely a scar!" I said, and with a thrill of joy laid my lips down upon it reverently. She looked me in the face a moment, vainly trying to speak, then suddenly hid her face in my breast and clung to me, sobbing and laughing together. It was a sweet moment, and in it I forgot all the pain I had ever endured.

We sat a long time without words, her cheek upon my heart, my lips resting in a perpetual kiss upon her bright hair. No emotion could have been holier, I know, than the tenderness with which I surrounded her. She had been wronged, yet was pure and priceless; a child in experience but with an angel's heart. We had come strangely and with much pain to each other, yet for that, perhaps, were the more sure each of the other.

At last she turned her head and put her lips lightly to mine for a moment, and without words our souls were plighted eternally.

After that we sat apart a little, and holding fast my hand, she asked me brightly to tell her all which had befallen me since that night when I rode away before dawn to Punta Gorda. I felt it a heavy tale to tell, and too painful at points for many words, yet I felt it only honorable and just that she should have full knowledge of my journey; so I told her all that I have the reader, save the grave question of my mother's death; that I feared to tell her of, seeing it was all unsolved as yet, and might grieve and frighten her.

She sat through it all like one held by a spell of terror, the pupils of her large eyes narrowing and widening, her breath stopping at times, fear or pity or amazement changing the light in her face momentarily, until, at the end, she laid her forehead against my arm with tightly closed eyes, and with a little shivering gasp of prayer was silent.

There was far more for Marguerite in the wild story that I had told than I then knew, and it may be that my all but utter ignorance of her past, save that she had been delicately and gently bred, might have found enlightenment but for that which fell a moment later. For as she lay against my arm, shuddering at her face a picture of terror.

I followed the direction of her eyes with my own, and thought I saw a face melting away from the window in the darkness. Marguerite sank upon a chair, her hand pressed against her heart.

"What was it? Who was it?" I cried.

"It looked like the ghost of your father," she panted. "It must have been fancy, imagination. How strange!"

"Yes, a mental creation, a fancy," I said lightly, but her face was grave.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

I fell asleep that night only after having pondered long and of many things. Never before in my life had my blood gone about in my veins with so sweet and comfortable a sense.

Marguerite loved me. Whatever befell

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It's useless to waste broad hints on narrow-minded people.

And the face of the homely girl may be her best chaperon.

Men may be brighter than they look, but they seldom look it.

To the fat lady life should be anything but a dreary waist.

It takes more than a daily bath to keep a man's record clean.

The best of men are sometimes worsted—and that's no idle yarn.

A close student of human nature seldom lends money to his friends.

A prude is a girl who always knows a lot of things she shouldn't know.

If any one loves a man for the enemies he makes it's himself.

No, Cordelia, we wouldn't advise you to give a hungry man skin food.

After an old dog loses his teeth he is an advocate of peace at any price.

Our idea of a martyr is a man who lives up to his wife's expectations.

Ever notice how much better a stolen kiss doesn't taste than the real thing?

Even the manicure lady plays favorites; she doesn't treat all hands alike.

Few of us become round shouldered from carrying other people's burdens.

Merely loving a woman doesn't satisfy her; she wants you to make love to her.

Unless a man gets married he'll probably go to his grave believing that he knew it all.

Here's a tip for you, young man: Be sure that the old gentleman will come across with the obese veal before you attempt the role of prodigal son.

(Continued from page seven.)

me now, that fact would remain, a solace and a joy forever!

I came back to consciousness only when the sun was two hours up, and by the aid of Sam's knuckles on the door. When I had dressed and gone below, Sam unfolded me the news.

"Dat ghostus dat done look inter de winder last night," he said, grinning broadly, "done carry off four Plymouth Rock hens an' er gobbler an' er lot ob sweet co'n an' trash! It putty healthy kin' ob ghose, 'pears lak!"

"Where is Mrs. Stanwood?" I asked, laughing quietly.

"De young mistis gone at daybreak with Unc' Peter to Garcia. She say ter tell yo' she done come home 'bout da'k."

Darling girl! She had gone, if possible to loosen the law's hold upon me. And, "Darling girl!" my heart whispered again and again, little knowing the sad, strange thing I should seem to her when she returned.

How shall I tell the story of that day? Beginning, as it did, in sunshine and listless quiet, and ending so fearfully!

Through more than half the day, Marguerite being gone to Garcia in my behalf, I wandered about Magnolia Place, restless, without definite purpose, conscious that I should set myself at something, and walking and listless, and without order or force of thought or feeling. My whole equipment of physical life seemed to ebb and sink and dwindle to a flaccid, feeble tone. Depleting grief, the draining fever and sleeplessness of the two months just passed, now that I stood at the dawn of better things, seemed suddenly to leave me without strength. I was like one who, swimming miles through buffeting water, feels the shore coming under his feet at last, only to sink down at the marge and let the seas drag at him, with scarcely strength enough remaining to feel or care.

Marguerite loved me! That was enough; I seemed numb and half indifferent to all the rest.

After a late and, despite Sam's chatter, a lonely breakfast, I went out and idled about the grounds, standing still most of the time and listening dreamily to the droning of a thousand bees working among the blossoms, or watching the humming birds sport at the fragrant doors of the trumpet-flowers and morning-glories. Again I lay on the rustic bench by the rose-arbor, and sleepily listened to the intricate fluting of a mocking bird, hidden somewhere among the magnolias, and after a time, turning upon my side, watched for a long time two golden orioles hanging their nest in a pepper tree near the gate, and wondered at that delicious force in nature, which makes and prompts the mating time. All this lives in my memory only from that which followed it.

After a lonely dinner, I loitered about the drawingroom, library, and music-room. I remember that I stood for many minutes watching the tantalizing, inscrutable smile on the face of the image of Buddha in the corner of the library, and afterward sat at the piano in the music-room, striking a single minor chord over and over again to listen to it fall and fall and die away. Being weak and tired, its ebb and lapse into silence seemed to please and comfort me.

At last, with book in hand, I went out and laid down on the wicker lounge in the rose-arbor, and throught to read. But the story failed of interest; it seemed slow and trivial beside the recent actual experiences of my own soul. The leafy hall in which I lay was filled with scent, and, being heat down upon by a strong sun, held a clear, green air, toned low and inviting sleep. The walls of the arbor murmured with hundreds of toiling bees. At length, listening to the purring, musical buzz of these little honey-men, and thinking vaguely of many things, I sank into a dreamy languor, and, drowsing, was very grateful and sweet, but, alas! the waking! How shall I ever forget that?

How long I slept I do not know, but I think not long, and all of that seemed mingled full of dreams. When I awoke, the awakening was not like anything I had ever known before. My every sense was locked, all the processes of my life held fast and rigid like something bolted to an immovable rock. I was singularly conscious; a far stronger, clearer light of perception and conception dwelt in my brain than ever before in my finest, sanest moments; and yet I could not lift my eye-lids or move a hand or foot. Bodily, I was dead.

Beside the lounge stood a man. I did not see him with my eyes, but by that inexplicable process of mind, which sometimes ensues when all the bodily functions seem withdrawn and centered in the brain; when the soul might be said to send out invisible rays of intelligence.

He stood as still as stone, bending a little toward me, his hands held out over me and clinched in pale, bluish knots, his eyes burning upon my face with the steady, fearful glare of a serpent's when poised to strike, and with lips pressed bloodless in a thin, white beard.

He was an astonishing figure; thin, sharp-corded, bowed, with eyes sunken and over-set with gray brows, flesh yellowish and shrunken and twisted about the mouth and hair snow-white, unkempt, and falling to the collar of his coat. His stringy, feeble shape was covered by a dingy, rusty suit of black, a brown, slouching hat rested on his white hair, and a soiled red kerchief was tied around his neck. But his fingers and eyes! his flesh and face! Ah, here seemed insanity steeped in wildest fire; that, surely, or the creature was not human, but a fiend. My physical man was as wood; I feared no injury from it; but my soul cowered in terror of that which it saw in this human shape. He was not from the Pit, but there was that within him, which, finding outward expression, made the Pit seem possible.

At last the steady shine of his eyes broke; they fell away from my face with a quivering glitter; he put his hand upon my wrist, then laid his ear to my heart and listened. I perceived that he did this, but I felt nothing whatever. Then he picked up a cane from the ground, and stood a little, while a strange, devilish grin went over his wrinkled countenance. He set the cane before him, and leaned upon its top, and, as he looked at me, a faint, cruel gurgle of laughter came up from his throat. Then suddenly he turned and vanished through the narrow door.

I saw him, as I remember it, precisely as one sees the objects in the clearest of dreams; vivid and plain beyond all sights that meet us when awake, and actual more actual in truth, than common life. When he had gone, my mind, that strange, bright drop of light still living in my brain, seemed to fall back upon itself and lie quivering.

No clause that was ever fashioned out of words could convey to another an impression of that which I felt; for, though my mortal parts were as so much more senseless earth, my soul remained all the capacity for trouble and suffering that it had ever known.

My mind's horror was that it had no means of expression; I yearned to move, to speak, to breathe, but could send no power into my members; my soul was as a conscious, sentient force, pent and locked as the center of a block of granite. I began to heave and strain, horribly, but the action was only that of sensibility; a wild throe and exertion of the mind; but the suffering and sense were the same as if I had lain sealed in crushing plaster. I suffocated, sweat, and cried out in frenzy, but made no sound, and remained cold and motionless as stone.

At last my intellect lay spent, moaning within itself. I was lost! That malignant power, of which I had read and thought so much, had seized and frozen me to the marrow! Father in Heaven, save and pity me! What had I accomplished of injury to God's world that such a power should be loosened upon me? that I should thus hang half way down the great abyss of oblivion, unable to sink and be blotted out in its darkness or rise into the true light of life?

I came slowly out of this hazy state to a kind of calmness. If I were destined to lie in this condition through weeks and months and, may be, years, how frightful then to be insane! How more than awful if at last I should go on into the next life bereft of reason! What if this were the natural process of death, each soul lying imprisoned thus until its strength and fortitude were tested and determined! the clear and calm and strong passing Heaven, the fear-torn and distorted falling at last to a realm peopled by reasonless demons! Strange and unnatural as the thought was, it helped for a little time to steady and nerve me against wildness.

The bees burrowing in the blossoms on the outside of the bower gave off a score of new sounds; whining notes of complaint and disappointment, tiny snarlings of anger, high-keyed squeaks of expectation, and sing-song humming of contented labor. The singing of the birds, and other near noises, came clear and strangely pregnant with meanings. But the passivity of it all, the indifference to me, lying so fearfully helpless in the midst of it, smote me with a cold sense of cruelty. I felt myself alien, gone beyond the pale of comradeship, consideration. I was dead.

When time had gone—perhaps two hours of it—a colored child, a girl, came to the door of the arbor and looked at me. Her eyes widened wildly for an instant, then, with a scream of terror, she fled toward the house. In a few minutes I hear Sam and Abbie coming toward the rose-covered shed.

"I tell yo', Abbie, right now, I does, dat Marse Francis am tired an' wants to sleep!" protested Sam. "If we done wake 'im up, he not gwine like it!" Evidently Abbie had the young man by the arm and was forcing him forward. The child was with them and was crying.

"You' come 'long now, Sam! Don' be er goose!" urged Abbie. "If anything done happen ter Marse Francis, an' we not see to him, mistis gwine give us our walkin' papahs, sho'! I jus' believs I not gwine marry no slim weak-kneed critter-tah as yo' am nohow! Is yo' comin'?"

"Yes, Abbie! But—but dat ghose been yere, dat w'ut I 'spect!"

When they stood at the door, there was a moment's silence, then Sam fled precipitately, yelling, as he went: "Marse Francis am daid! De ghose done drunk his blood. De ghose been yere an' got Marse Francis!" I heard his voice rising wildly as he sped through the orchards, and on and on until it came faintly to me from the fields.

Near night as I lay rolling thought to and fro in my head, I heard a sudden hollow roar of hoofs upon the bridge, then up the lane between the long rows of pepper trees came a galloping horse. I knew from the heavy, uneven fall of hoofs, from the strain and creak of leather, from the labored panting, that the beast was wet and worn.

"De mistis is come! De mistis is come!" I heard voices shouting. Feet went rattling out of the house, there was commotion and crying. Marguerite jumped to the ground and came in at the gate. I seemed to see it all; the beautiful, slender white girl pausing an instant among the black faces, her long habit trailing, her hat blown back and hanging by its ribbons about her throat. "Where is he? what have you done?" she asked, then, as they pointed, she came swiftly to the arbor. What was in Marguerite's heart, beyond an agony of apprehension which pictured itself upon her face, I know not; what I felt, lying there dead, with my love coming to look upon my stony features, is for the imag-

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ination but not for words to describe.

When she entered the arbor door, her hand went to her throat, her flesh whitened, and a look of death came into her eyes. She reeled a little, then with a cry of anguish, fell upon her knees beside me, and clasped me with her arms, gazing into my unresponsive face with dry, burning dilated eyes.

Marguerite laid her head down upon my breast and moaned. I felt within me how her heart was torn. "O, my darling! mine for but one day! and now you are taken from me! Today you are declared free and innocent, and now death has robbed you of all! O, let me die! let me die!" Thus her voice went, trembling into sobs and whispers. The old negress knelt beside her, smoothing her shoulder with a black, shaking hand, and trying to comfort her. Inwardly I was swept as with a storm of tears.

I cannot, and would not if I could, here picture all my poor girl's grief, nor describe by what wild means of love she sought to warm and win me back to life again. All that shall be sacred, though from that epoch there comes to me no sweeter, stranger, more rememberable thing. It gave me a look into her heart which shall leave me marveling at love's greatness until my true death shall come.

Near dark other help came; a planter from the Punta Rassa road, and two white men, with the wife of one of them, from further up the Traloume. Crude but earnest efforts were made to restore me to consciousness, but without avail. All was bustle and confusion, mingled with restraint and horror. After dark—I know not how long—there came another and far greater roar of hoofs from the bridge, and, after a little space, eight horsemen galloped up to the gate, and leaving their mounts with the colored boys to be taken to the stables, came hurriedly in. Dr. Dubette was at the head. Hamlin and the coroner were among the number. Guided by Abbie, they came straight to the arbor and entered.

I cannot describe how unattractive most of these men appeared to me. Hamlin somehow seemed handsomer than before, but the others, and especially Dr. Dubette, appealed to me with a new kind of ugliness. I wondered within me if this was the result of preconceived prejudice, for Marguerite and those I liked best seemed never so beautiful before, or if to that subliminal sense by which I perceived, the character was visible as well as the physical man. May be, I thought, that was why the man or fiend who had first stood beside me had looked so distorted and terrible!

Upon a table in the room two lamps were burning, and Dubette stepped directly to my side. The men crowded about him, filling nearly all the room, while the black folk gathered about the door. Just inside the door stood Marguerite, with white face turned toward the doctor, and one trembling hand pressed upon her bosom, the other knotted in her dress by her side. I saw it all, but no one looked at her. The scene is yet as vivid to me as if I had witnessed it but yesterday.

Dubette took my wrist in his right hand and pulled his watch from his pocket with his left, but immediately returned the time-piece to its place. He could hardly count a pulse which had been still for six or seven hours. He turned his eyes to the ceiling, lowered them, and returned his gaze to the ceiling again. He then felt for my heart, made a test or two for heat, and said, solemnly, but with an obvious smack of the lips: "He is entirely cold; life has been extinct for several hours!"

I saw Marguerite clutch at her heart, take a single step toward me, and fall face forward. Hamlin turned and caught her and all the men looked at each other curiously. Ah, God! how I tried to cry to her as I saw her falling. How my soul flung itself about and beat against its bars! The poor girl was carried out into the air, and Dubette went out to her.

I was treated with great tenderness by those who then took charge of me; Hamlin, Uncle Peter, our neighbor from down the Punta Rassa road, and one of the men from up the Traloume. I was borne into the north drawing-room and was laid upon the two tables, covered with white cloth, and all my limbs composed and straightened decently. A white cloth covered me from head to foot, and there I lay in the soft light and silence, while the long night went by.

Where was Beckwith now? coming across the sea? landing in New Orleans? on his way to Gaveiro? Oh, God! when would help arrive? What help? I was not mad to dream that any human power could raise me out of this cold death into which I had fallen? If I, with all my strength, could not break forth to life and motion, surely none but God might help me!

Until after midnight Hamlin lay on the divan in the music-room, looking up at the ceiling. Through the wide, curtained door he came each time the clock chimed and looked at my face. Like myself, he was but a big boy, and the tears came often to his eyes.

At two o'clock in the morning Marguerite came into the room, moving over the rich carpet like a noiseless shadow. She whispered to the two watchers that they might go and rest, that Uncle Peter would sit by the door leading into the room, and she would watch with me.

The two men went softly out, and the pale girl came and laid her cheek against mine, and wet my cold face with her tears. I wondered at her love; even in death's presence it had no fear. She left the cloth turned back that the light might shine upon my face, and sat down and held my lifeless right hand between her two slim palms until the gray dawn came. These were the strangest, sweetest, hardest hours that I have ever known.

When the sun was risen, sending in its low rays, a beam of rose fell against my face, and, may be, made it seem life like; for the dear girl laid her head upon my breast, and drew my nerveless arm about her neck, and wept and talked to me, until Uncle Peter came, and himself made tearful by the piteous sight, gently led her out.

Then the day went, a century in length, and I was coffined, and hushed feet came and went, and flowers lay all about me on the black drapery and upon my narrow, breathless house; and there was whispering about the rooms and low voices out on the galleries, and through the drawn curtains, with the dim light, came the mellow murmur of bees, the fluting of mocking-birds and thrushes, and the dreamy beat of cowbells from the meadows.

Night fell again, and wore away much like the first, save there were other watchers, but Marguerite remained by me throughout the night. To me the minutes went like slow, heavy-flowing waves of moulten lead, crushing, full of torture. But dawn came at last, and the sun rose half way to noon, and in the house and grounds were many people. A hearse and carriage and several light wagons stood at the gate; many horses bearing empty saddles were hitched to the meadow-fence and pepper-trees.

Beside my coffined form a clergyman stood, and prayed, and spoke of hope in Christ and the resurrection. All down the long drawing-rooms went a sound of women weeping. But my poor Marguerite—ah, I cannot speak of that!

Erelong a procession drew down the Punta Rassa road, and I went, coffined and hearsed, to lie beside my mother in the little village of the dead. The scene, and all that I felt, now comes clearly before me, but words are but motes in the re-creation of sights and emotions such as these. When I was put to rest, and the crypt closed, and the loosened staples driven home, and the crowd flowed away, leaving me in the deep silence, consciousness left me for a time. I know not how it could be, but oblivion's black stream rose over me, and as I went down, I thought it final death.

When mind awoke again in me, the heavens were weeping. I felt that darkness was abroad upon the world; my spent intellect had slept for hours. I heard a growl of thunder now and then, and the gush of rain upon the roof of the tomb, and the wind swinging the boughs of the trees.

All the night I heard the storm blow and beat above me; the soft rain moving across the world with velvet-shod feet, the wind moaning and grieving or rushing angrily. As the hours went, the storm rose and fell, but at last grew to a bellowing, threshing tempest of rain, wind, and lightning. I lay listening, wondering if Marguerite heard! If my mother living so near me, heard! when suddenly a great bolt fell from heaven, and with it a peal and crash that seemed to split the earth downward on its core. The vault was ablaze with light, to me for an instant the coffins seemed transparent. My blood leaped in my veins like a thousand stinging needles, my brain ran full of fire, and crying wildly I turned in my coffin and split it open in the power and madness of inexpressible agony.

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* * *

Fighting Battles Again.

The veterans were recalling war scenes. One story did tread upon another's heels, so fast they followed, and imagination increased with each recital. Finally came the turn of old Uncle Dell, ex-private in an Illinois regiment.

"We was all lined up ready to begin the battle of the Wilderness," he said, "when old Grant come ridin' down the line to my regiment and called out. 'Is Lieut. Dell of Illinois here?'

"I happened to be back in the rear, superintendin' bringin' up some amm'nition, and the colonel told him I would soon be back. Grant rode away an' come back a few minutes later.

"'Is Lieut. Dell here yet?' he inquired. They told him no, an' he rode away with his brow kind o' clouded.

"The third time he come a tearin' down the line, staff rattlin' along behind, and called out, 'Is Lieut. Dell of Illinois here?'

"'Here, general,' I says; and he whirled around and yelled, 'Let the battle begin!'"

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An Eye to Business.

A dressmaker had sent her servant to post a letter and was anxiously waiting her return.

"Did you post my letter all right, Mary?" she asked, as the maid of all work entered.

"Oh, yes, ma'am," replied Mary, holding a penny out to her mistress.

"What is this for?" again asked the fair employer. "I gave it to you for the stamp."

"I didn't have to use it, ma'am. I put the letter in the box when nobody was looking."

Sarcasm This.

"Excuse me, madam, but would you mind walking the other way, and not passing the horse?" said an English cabman with exaggerated politeness, to the lady who had just paid a minimum fare with no fees.

"Why?" she inquired.

"Because if 'e sees wot 'e's been carrying for a shilling 'e'll have a fit," was the freezing answer.

Merely Obeying Orders.

"Daughter, did I not see you sitting on that young man's lap when I passed the parlor door last evening?"

"Yes, and it was very embarrassing. I wish you had not told me to."

"Good heavens! I never told you to do anything of the kind!"

"You did. You told me that if he attempted to get sentimental I must sit on him."

Held His Head High.

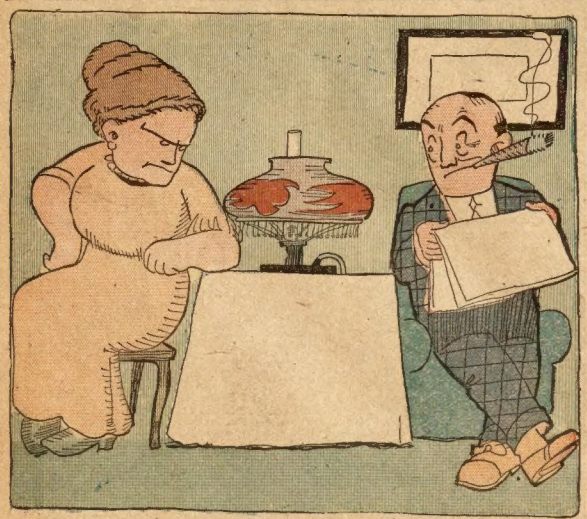
Friend—I know you are a proud and happy father, and I've no doubt that baby is a regular cherub, and all that; but I don't see why you need hold your head quite so high.

Young Father—That's to keep from dropping asleep.

Gullible.

"Is he easily flattered?"

"Well, he actually believes the kind words that the toastmaster says about him when introducing him for a speech."



Mrs.—Before we were married you said there was not another woman like me!

Mr.—Yes, and I'm glad of it, for the sake of other men.

TICKLISH

Willing To Tell It.

The check which the comely young German handed in at the window of a Walnut street savings fund bank the other day was made payable to Gretchen H. Schmidt, and she had indorsed it simply Gretchen Schmidt. The man at the receiving teller's window called her back just as she was turning away to rectify the mistake.

"You don't deposit this quite this way," he exclaimed. "See, you have forgotten the H."

The young woman looked at her check and blushed a rosy red.

"Ach, so I haf," she murmured, and wrote hurriedly.

"Age 23."

Didn't Work Right.

De Smoker—Do you know, my dear, an eminent scientist has discovered that tobacco arrests the development of bacteria?

Wife—Does it, really? You wouldn't want your little wife to be eaten up by those horrid bacteria, would you, my dear? Where's your other pipe? I'll become a smoker myself.

Whale Story.

A worthy old dame of New England once invited her husband's attention to what seemed to her a curious item in the journal she was looking at. "Listen to this," said she, reading:

"The Mary H. Barker of Gloucester reports that she saw two whales, a cow and a calf, floating off Cape Cod the day before yesterday."

"Well, what about it?" asked the husband.

"Only this," replied his spouse: "I can understand about the two whales, but what beats me is, how the cow and the calf got 'way out there."

Real Disappointment.

A prominent business man in a Western State found it necessary on one occasion to defeat a bill pending in the Legislature. He went to a lobbyist and told him to beat the bill and prevent its becoming a law at any price. The lobbyist carried out the instructions and the measure did not go on the statute books.

"I'm sorry I had to resort to such a thing as bribery," said the capitalist to the lobbyist, "but if that bill had passed it would have ruined my entire business."

"Gee-whiz!" exclaimed the lobbyist in sorrow. "If I had known it meant that much to you I would have gotten more money out of you."

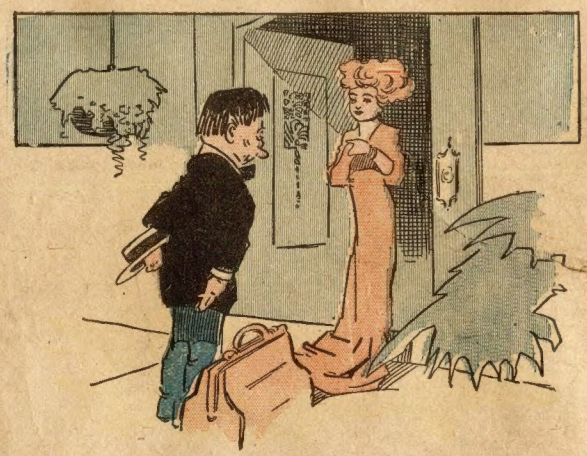
Both in the Same Boat.

The new cook, who had come into the household during the holidays, asked her mistress:

"Where ban your son? I not seeing him round no more."

"My son?" replied the mistress, pridefully. "Oh, he has gone back to Yale. He could only get away long enough to stay until New Year's day, you see. I miss him dreafully, though."

"Yas. I know yoost how you feel. My broder, he ban in yail sax time since T'ankgiving."



The Man—Madam, I'm the piano tuner.
The Woman—I didn't send for a piano tuner.
The Man—I know it, lady; the neighbors did.

A New Brand.

Uncle Hiram stroked his throat whiskers and watched the big touring car as it whizzed past him and up the boulevard, emitting a trail of bluish smoke from its oil choked engine.

"Huh!" he snifted. "Them may be swell city fellers, but they certainly was a smokin' some durn orful seegars."

Higher Education.

"Can you give me a job as office boy?"

"I might. How are you on spelling and arithmetic?"

"We didn't pay much attention to those studies at our school. But I can model in clay and do worsted work."

Delicately Put.

Young Lady (trying to steer)—Why, this boat acts very queerly, seems to me.

Boatman (gently)—I guess she feels a strange hand at the helm.

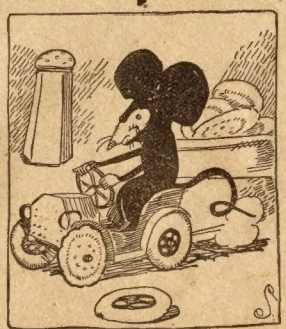
Asking Too Much.

American Girl—And if I marry you, will I live in an old English castle, with turrets and battlements, famed in song and story?

English Lord—Yes, you shall.

American Girl—And will you introduce me to the Prince of Wales' set?

English Lord—I'm—er—not until I begin to get tired of you.



Mr. Mouse—Great Scott! It's mighty lucky I was so near that cracker bowl when the wheel of my auto busted.

TACKLES

Mrs. Younge—My husband promised me that I should never hear a harsh word from him in all of our married life and I never have.

Mrs. Oldun—H'm! How long have you been married?

Mrs. Younge—Let me see. Just two days and four hours.

An Excuse That Held Water.

"Waiter!" roared the diner.

The waiter looked intently out of the window, pretending he hadn't heard. The diner had already complained of his chop and his chips and his napkin, and Alphonse had had about enough of him.

"Waiter!"

Reluctantly Alphonse moved over.

"Just look at the color of this water, waiter," growled the diner. "It's not fit to drink."

Critically the waiter raised the glass to the light and examined it. Then triumphantly he set it down again.

"No, sir; you're deceiving yourself, sir," he said kindly. "That water's perfectly all right, sir. It's the glass what's dirty!"

No Ray of Reason.

Tough Tigers—No use talkin', Bill, this 'ere liquor drinkin' perduces insanity. Look at Moldy Mike.

Nosey Jaggers—Is he crazy?

Tough Tigers—Gone daft. Why, he's so crazy he's gone into an instertoot to be cured o' the drinkin' habit. Any sane bein' would know well enough that life wouldn't be worth livin' arter bein' cured.

Little Difference.

"Here's a terrible misprint, sir. I called Jim Sweet a practical politician, and the typesetter has made it 'piratical.' Shall we stop the presses?"

Editor—I guess not. There's so little difference."

Off the Track.

Some amusement has been occasioned out near Paola, Mo., by a kink in a railroad track which pitched a mail clerk through the door of the car the other day and landed him in a haystack.

This recalls the story, perhaps unrecorded, of the brakeman who was making his first trip on an Illinois road which ran for some distance under the Mississippi bluffs. The ride was one violent wrench after another, and the brakeman had just about made up his mind he was lost when the train suddenly shot out upon a piece of straight and comparatively smooth track across the foot of a hollow. Leaping from his seat, he snatched up his lantern and dashed for the platform.

"Jump for your lives!" he shouted. "She's off the track!"

A Superstitious Creature.

He—You acknowledge that you—er—like me, yet refuse.

She (belle of the season)—Yes, I must. Thirteen is an unlucky number.

"Eh?"

"You are the thirteenth man who has proposed to me; and if we should become engaged I'm afraid something dreadful would happen."

"You are foolishly superstitious. What could happen?"

"I might marry you."

His Best Chance.

"Would it be any harm to deceive her about my age?" inquired the elderly millionaire.

"Probably not."

"I'm sixty. How would it do to confess to fifty?"

"I think your chances would be better with her if you claimed seventy-five."

Preparing a Pianist.

"So his mother intends making a pianist out of him?"

"Yes."

"Who is to be his master?"

"She hasn't got that far yet; at present she is merely just letting his hair grow."

Hard to Bear.

New Nurse—I'm goin' to leave when me week is up, mum.

Mistress—Dear me! What's the matter?

New Nurse—Please, mum, your children, is just gettin' the measles, an' all the other nurses cuts me dead.

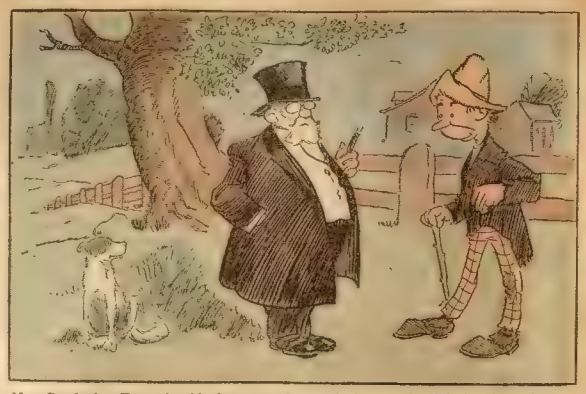
Had a Good Time.

Mrs. Wayback—Did you go to the theater while you was in the city, Joshua?

Mr. Wayback—No, Maria, I couldn't find no theaters somehow. The only place I could find was a dime museum—but I saw that six times.

Bjenks—What is that peculiar key on your typewriter?

Bjones—Something new—my own invention. Whenever you come to a word you can't spell all you have to do is to press that key and it makes a blur.



Mr. Goodsole—You should form good associations and stick to them. Those friends I have made have been bound to me as with links of steel.

Percy Pikepounder—Yes, sir. I wunst worked in a chain gang meself.

He Got His Sleep.

Doctor—I see what the matter is. You do not get sleep enough. Take this prescription to a druggist's.

Mr Blinkers—Thank you. I presume that's what's the matter.

Doctor (next day)—Ah, good morning! You are looking much better today. Slept last night, didn't you?

Mr. Blinkers—Slept like a top. I feel first-rate.

Doctor—How many doses of that opiate did you take?

Mr. Blinkers (in surprise)—I didn't take any. I gave it to the baby.

Hank Wayburn—I see Joey Swarts is wearin' a collar an' tie again.

Fred Pringle—He is, eh? Well, then, either the Widow Smiler got that legacy or he's goin' down t' the deppo t' see the school teachers' special go through.

New Argument for a Pension.

An old lady called on a lawyer in San Francisco to ask him to have the United States Government grant her a pension. She told a sad story of her destitution and added a glowing account of the heroism her husband had displayed in the civil war.

"As I understand it," said the pension attorney, "you ask for this pension in the name of the valiant services rendered to your country by your husband."

"No," replied the old lady. "I ask it in the name of God and His mercy."

"In that case," said the lawyer, "I'll get you your pension. I have very few applications in that name."

A Mistaken Policy.

First Tramp—I say, Mike, th' fashion of gents like me an' you carryin' clubs is a mistake.

Second Tramp—Git out! Clubs scares people inter bein' hospitable, don't they?

First Tramp—They useter; but w'en folks began ter notice our clubs, they began to keep big dogs, an' now it takes all th' cold vittles they has ter feed th' dogs.

Strange, Strange.

Willis—Bumpus is one of the oddest men I ever saw.

Gillis—How so?

Willis—Why, when a fellow borrows a quarter and doesn't pay it back, Bumpus finally admits that it is the quarter he cares about, and not the principle of the thing.

Man's Queer Ways.

"Man's a strange creature."

"What now?"

"When he reads a medical book he fancies he has every disease described; but let him read the work of a moralist and all the faults pointed out he sees not in himself, but in his neighbor."

Feels Better Now.

A Boston lady was having a new frock fixed, and she didn't quite like it. This was as usual. She wanted several changes made. The dressmaker patiently did her job, and meanwhile the lady gossiped.

"Do you make doll dresses?" she wanted to know.

"Occasionally," was the reply.

"Is there anything out of the ordinary in that sort of work?"

"Indeed there is. The ones I fit are so easily pleased."

The dressmaker thinks she may have lost a customer, but she knows that she has relieved her mind. So, on the whole, she feels much better.

An Inexperienced Youth.

Married Man—And you are engaged to Miss Blankie?

Young Friend—Yes. I watched her a whole day on a railroad train, and became so interested in her that I followed her up, got an introduction, and now we are to be married.

"Was she traveling alone?"

"No, she was with her mother, and her kindness to her mother is what captured me."

"But, gee Willikins, old man, she'll go on being kind to her mother."

A Railroad Map.

Mrs. Bibbs (as the train gives a lurch)—My goodness! Are we off the track?

Mr. Bibbs—No, we seem to be running all right. Guess we went round the curve. We must be at Chicago.

"But Chicago was a thousand miles off when we started, and we've only been an hour."

"Can't help it. I looked at the map of this railroad, and there ain't a curve in it till it gets to Chicago. Hunt up y'r things."

A Little Deception.

Ragged Robert—Wot yer doin'?

Mouldy Mike—I'm layin' wid my head in der sun, so's to get meself sunburnt.

"Wot's th' game now?"

"There's a temperance feedin' place around th' corner, an' th' redder a man's nose th' more sympathy he gits."

Honest Mike.

Pedestrian (giving dime to mendicant)—There's a plate of soup for you.

"If ye don't mind, mister, we'll call this a couple o' sangwiches. I've got a plate o' soup in me pocket wot a gent on Fift' av'noo give me."

Mr. Brown—So your son narrowly escaped being hit by the locomotive?

Mrs. Green—Yes; and it's the first time I ever knew him to miss a train without swearing about it for the next two days.

MADELINE DARE'S VENGEANCE, OR THE UNWRITTEN LAW.

By WELDON J. CODD.

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Begun in No. 21, May 27. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XV.

OPEN FOR RATING.

CYRIL DARE in flesh and blood, the Cyril Dare who stood behind the imposing business combination, announced in great glaring gilt letters on polished plate glass, was the Cyril Dare, ex-convict, wife deserter, the man for whom Madeline Dare was resolute to search the world.

It was about four o'clock on the afternoon of the day succeeding to the one upon which so unexpectedly, so startlingly, Madeline had come face to face with the enlightening business sign of Cyril Dare & Co., that the man she had not seen for over two years sat in his private office, abstractedly and moodily staring at a heap of papers, lying on the rich rosewood desk before him.

It was the old Cyril Dare as to contour of face and general characteristics of manner and form. He had, however, grown a mustache and a faint line of whiskers high on either cheek. This make-up had disguised the close-shaven convict face. It seemed, too, as if he had colored his eyebrows darker than their natural hue. At all events, these precautions would on the surface defy suspicion or identification as the escaped and supposedly dead convict.

Little of fear or memory in that respect troubled Cyril Dare at the present moment. All that dark section of the past was dead and buried. Not in the faintest way of suggestion or peril during the past two years, had he received the most remote impression that any one suspected his identity.

What of the brief tragic honeymoon at Glendale and his subsequent establishment in the city, the course of the story will tell. Suffice it, that here after the lapse of two years the man who had robbed his wife of money, jewelry and peace of mind, sat in the private room of his magnificent suite of offices, surrounded by every evidence of wealth and prosperity.

Upon a side stand was a ponderous volume, one line in which told the whole story of the business standing of Cyril Dare & Co.

"G. A. A."

"G. A. A." comprised the cabalistic symbols of the great Bradstreet commercial agency, that credit censor of the world, which makes or unmakes millionaires at the move of a pen point.

"G. A. A." meant the highest financial quotation possible; one million dollars and over, unimpeachable business integrity, the highest grade of credit attainable.

To this lofty height within one year the new mushroom-growth brokerage house of Cyril Dare & Co. had advanced. Its principal, as said, now sat alone, impervious to his elegant surroundings, immersed in deep thought, and this apparently of no cheering character.

Dare was elegantly dressed. There was a certain careless debonair trait in attire and manner that proclaimed the man still young and capable of enjoying prosperity and luxury. He abandoned his abstracted air and assumed a quiet, pleasant expression of face, as a clerk tapped at the door, received permission to enter, and a moment later announced:

"Mr. Vermilyea."

The new comer was a portly, dignified-faced man of middle age. At a cursory glance he suggested the retired capitalist. There was a grim, watchful expression about the eyes, undeniable determination and even cruelty indicated by the hard lines about the lips. He bowed curtly, saw that the door of the office was closed, and took a seat facing Cyril Dare.

"Well," he said at once, "what is the decision?"

"I must make it now?" inquired the broker.

"At once."

Dare shifted about uneasily. He looked rebellious, anxious and plastic all at once. His visitor kept his eye fixed upon his face steadily.

"See here, Dare," he said, after a brief silence between them, "let us review the past. You came to me two years ago, a beggar."

"Well, yes—rather, a pauper. Put it that way, Vermilyea," responded Dare, with a feeble attempt at a laugh.

"You had some information to sell."

"Which was bought,"

"At a high price."

"It won you several millions, I believe," submitted Dare.

"And you the nucleus of a pretty good-sized fortune, I imagine," retorted Vermilyea. "Only a large and influential house like Vermilyea & Co. could handle your tremendous proposition. Only a bold plunger like myself, would take and trust the story you told of the forthcoming report on the crop situation."

"You found me reliable, didn't you?" interrogated Dare.

"Yes. I made enough to retire on. Like many another man, however, who gets the fever of speculation, I failed to appreciate when I was well off. Last month I dropped the bulk of my fortune."

"So you have told me."

"This month I see a bare chance of redeeming myself. I made you rich. I have guided and assisted you. I have taught you the ropes. Now, I find that we are weak, apart. You have lost your nerve, and are calculating on retiring on a modest competence. Is not this true?"

"Perhaps."

"I know it."

"I care less for the excitement of the pit, for money each day," declared Dare indifferently.

"I helped you. Then you must return the compliment."

"How?"

"By becoming my partner. The announcement of a coalition of the two great houses of Vermilyea and Dare will carry weight and give us united strength."

"For what purpose?"

"To run a corner in the market, which I can successfully engineer with our joint resources."

"And if I would rather stay out?"

"You dare not."

"How?"

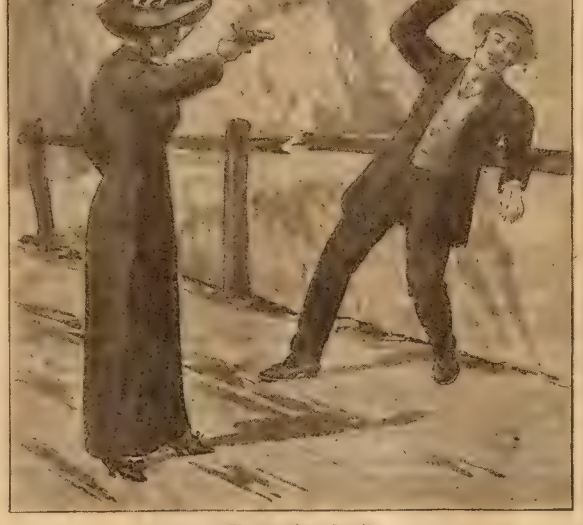
"Listen to me, Dare," spoke the millionaire forcibly. "I know what the market does not know. You have neglected certain strength and safeguards in fortifying your investments. It is only a question of a drop of a few points downward of some of your holdings in industrials, to sweep you off the map, slick and clean."

Cyril Dare looked surprised, annoyed and anxious.

"Suppose it?" he demanded recklessly.

"Failure—that of it. I can save you, and win a fortune for both of us. I ask no assistance from you whatever. I simply aim to bulk our business standing and resources to make a gigantic drive on the market and clean up a new fortune."

"I am tired of planning, of fighting, of worrying over the ups and downs of speculation," cried Dare, suddenly springing to his feet and pacing the floor in a disturbed and excited way. "I do not



"The unwritten law."

WANTED TO SLEEP

Curious That a Tired Preacher Should Have Such Desire.

A minister speaks of the curious effect of Grape-Nuts food on him and how it has relieved him.

"You will doubtless understand how the suffering from indigestion with which I used to be troubled made my work an almost unendurable burden; and why it was that after my Sabbath duties had been performed, sleep was a stranger to my pillow till nearly daylight.

"I had to be very careful as to what I ate, and even with all my care I experienced poignant physical distress after meals, and my food never satisfied me.

"Since I began to use Grape-Nuts the benefits I have derived from it are very definite. I no longer suffer from indigestion, and I began to improve from the time Grape-Nuts appeared on our table.

"I find that by eating a dish of this food after my Sabbath work is done, (and I always do so now) my nerves are quieted and rest and refreshing sleep are ensured me.

"I feel that I could not possibly do without Grape-Nuts food, now that I know its value. It is invariably on our table—we feel that we need it to make the meal complete—and our children will eat Grape-Nuts when they cannot be persuaded to touch anything else." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Michigan.

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Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

When a girl's engagement is announced she likes to believe that several of her gentlemen acquaintances feel as though life had lost its charm for them.

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Dr. J. E Cannaday, 1417 Park Square, Sedalia, Mo.

References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo.

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A bold, safe, antiseptic, discutient, resolvent liniment, and a proven remedy for this and similar troubles. Mr. W. Scaloggi, Becket, Mass., before using this remedy, suffered intensely with painful and inflamed veins, they were swollen, knotted and hard. He writes: "After using one and one-half bottles of **ABSORBINE JR.**, the veins were reduced, inflammation and pain gone, and I have had no recurrance of the trouble during the past six years." Also removes all Goitre, Painful Swellings, Thrombocele, Varicocele, Bruises, "Black and Blue" discolorations, etc., is a genuine antiseptic for MAN OR BEAST. Price $1.00 a bottle, $2.00 12-oz. bottle at druggists or delivered. **W. F. YOUNG, P. D. F., 337 Temple St., Springfield, Mass.**

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believe that my affairs are as bad as you declare."

"They are on a teeter."

"And may turn my way."

"Possibly, unless some one got inside information, as I have done, and sent out a warning."

"Who would, or who could?"

"The commercial agencies."

Dare laughed derisively.

"Why," he cried, "do you understand that the firm of Cyril Dare & Co. are rated in the highest grade of capital and credit?"

"Were."

"What do you mean?" demanded Dare, paling slightly.

"What I say. I received a special report today."

"From"——"

"Bradstreets."

Dare gave a great gasp.

"Well?" he articulated with difficulty, his throat dry, his tones harsh and dissonant.

"Strictly confidential, mind you," explained Vermilyea. "See here."

He took from his pocket a tiny slip of thin white tissue paper. It bore the name typewritten: "Cyril Dare & Co." Beneath this was one single line, three simple words:

"Open for rating."

"And that means?" faltered Dare.

"Rating suspended pending closer investigation. The agency has somehow learned what I have learned—that you are on the brink. Spell it out sensibly, Dare. 'Open for rating,' unless I step in and save you, means—ruin!"

CHAPTER XVI.

A STRANGE PROPOSAL.

Cyril Dare swung back into his seat with a baffled look upon his face. His visitor had cornered him. Vermilyea was a hard, determined man. It was a question of defiance and ruin, or copartnership and a desperate speculation that might or might not eventuate in success.

"I don't see why you are hesitating," said the millionaire.

"Because, as I have already told you, I am sick and tired of the life I am leading," returned Dare wearily. "The game isn't worth the candle. If I followed my better impulses, I would desert the pit tomorrow and find some quiet place, to rest and really live."

"Ah!" sneered Vermilyea, "retrograde into the proprietor of some obscure cross-roads country store, eh? A lofty ambition!"

"What is there in the game we are playing?" demanded Dare. "It is just a scramble. The bones are thrown into the pit. There are not enough to go around among the hungry horde. The shrewd, powerful dog gets the most bones. Then the weaker ones are devoured by their fellows."

Vermilyea laughed harshly.

"You are talking that way just now because you are one of the under dogs," he declared. "Well, I will help you regain your supremacy. Come, is it Vermilyea, Dare & Co.?"

"I am to turn my business over to you?"

"Exactly."

"You to do all the manipulating?"

"Seeing that you have lost your nerve, isn't it better so?"

"Very well," said Dare recklessly, "agreed."

"I will soon have the G. A. A. rating restored," boasted Vermilyea. "I will show the market a drive that will give the new brokerage house a brilliant reputation. Agreed, then, we are partners. That is half of the bargain."

"Half of it, you say?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

The capitalist glanced sharply at the office door to be sure that it was closed. Then he drew his chair nearer to that of his companion.

"Dare," he said in a low confidential tone, "I have a daughter."

Dare started and stared strangely at the speaker. The young broker had attended pretty close to business since he had been lured into its fascinations. He had not been much of a mixer among his fellows, nor a society man. He had, however, once met the daughter of his new partner, Laura Vermilyea, at a fashionable reception. He wondered why his visitor alluded to her now.

"I have, as I say, as you know, a daughter," resumed Vermilyea, fixing his bold hypnotic gaze on Dare, and speaking as if he were referring to a market quotation or a share of stock. "She is young, good looking, my heiress. Fortune hunters have sought her and failed. A miserable, wretched artist has at last enchained her affections. If she marries him, I shall disown her. It must not be, Dare, I am paying you a compliment and showing you the confidence I repose in you, when I say that I shall be glad to call you my son-in-law."

"What!" cried the young broker in utter stupefaction. "You wish me to marry your daughter?"

"Exactly," nodded the capitalist, calmly.

"Oh, Vermilyea—impossible!"

"Why so?"

A strange, far away look had come into Dare's eyes. He averted his face for a moment or two, as if to conceal some powerful emotion, and was silent.

"There would be no legal impediment to such an arrangement?" inquired Vermilyea.

"None."

"You are not interested in some other lady?"

"Not at all," declared Dare definitely.

"Then—why—see here, Dare," continued the capitalist urgently and with eagerness, "be sensible, prudent and fortunate. I have watched you closely, and I like you. Aside from your feverish, gambling instinct, I have little fault to find with you. Let us be harmonious in business and in a social way."

"I had never thought of marriage," murmured Dare, almost sadly.

"Then think of it now."

"But your daughter?"

"Will bend to my will."

"And the man she loves?"

"A passing fancy, I assure you."

Dare bent his face on his hand. There was some complex element in this strange nature, solemnly serious at times. At last he looked up and said:

"It matters little to me. Candidly I have little pleasure or interest in life. If I am assured that I would not be a distasteful husband to your daughter and acceptable to your family—"

"I guarantee it."

"Then I would try and make her life happy."

Cyril Dare did not say this in a happy tone. Of this Vermilyea was heedless.

"Do you agree?" he asked.

"I hope I am guiltless of spoiling a young girl's love."

"Shake hands on it."

There was some further cursory conversation. Then the two men parted. For over an hour Cyril Dare sat with his face bent in his hands. At last he aroused himself.

He was pale, distressed-looking, unnerved. Dare went to the safe in a corner of the room. He opened a secret compartment, took out a large package of bank notes and securities, and placed them in an inner pocket.

"This is mine," he murmured. "It does not belong to the business. For the sake of the old life, caprice, a whim, I will place this against the dead past!"

Dare left the office and walked briskly along the street to an office building. He was preoccupied and did not notice a sinister-looking man take up his trail the moment he appeared.

It was just dusk as he entered the office of a lawyer. The name on the door was Harold Bright. As he crossed the threshold, his trailer followed closely on his heels.

Dare entered the lighted inner office, and was greeted in friendly manner by the young lawyer seated there at his desk.

"I have a strange and important trust to place in your hands," said Dare.

The lawyer closed the door leading into the anteroom. The lurker now stole into the latter apartment, mounted a chair, and pressed close to the open transom.

He looked and listened through a protracted interview between the two men in the inner office. At its end he leaped lightly to the floor, glided from the office and reached the street.

"It is Barton Rivers," he chuckled in a gleesome tone. "What rare good luck! I have the key to the whole situation. I am a made man."

CHAPTER XVII.

AVENGED!

The great coalition of the two brokerage houses of Vermilyea & Co. and Cyril Dare & Co. was duly announced. The papers were full of it. The commercial agencies called in their confidential intimations to trusted clients that the last named concern was "Open for Rating."

Things were going swimmingly for the new firm of Vermilyea, Dare & Co. The bulked business of the two houses gave undoubted strength to the merger. All Dare Co. was duly announced. The papers were full of it. The commercial agencies called in their confidential intimations to trusted clients that the last named concern was "Open for Rating."

Things were going swimmingly for the new firm of Vermilyea, Dare & Co. The bulked business of the two houses gave undoubted strength to the merger. All Vermilyea had said he could do he had accomplished. Dare was amazed at his boldness as a plunger, and could not fail to admire his business acumen.

Twice during the ensuing week Dare accompanied his business partner to his palatial summer house near Rockside. Twice he had been awarded an hour's interview with pretty Laura Vermilyea. Whatever the broker thought of the timid shrinking maiden, he kept it to himself. He was courteous, almost reserved with the heiress to the Vermilyea millions. The old capitalist rallied him as he would a favored friend, and his wife seemed interested and pleased in the progress of affairs. By no sign or word, however, did Dare indicate the least affection for Laura Vermilyea. He acted like a man whose heart was dead and was listlessly following out a set program from sheer necessity.

It was about ten days after the consummation of the partnership arrangement with Vermilyea, that Cyril Dare reached his room at the sumptuous private hotel where he had a suite of rooms, to be informed by his valet that a person had awaited his return from business for some time. He had given no name, and Dare found an utter stranger as he supposed awaiting him when he entered the little parlor of the suite.

"You wished to see me?" he inquired, regarding his visitor curiously.

"Yes."

"You have the advantage of me."

(Continued on page nineteen.)

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The House-Boat Boys;

Or, FLOATING DOWN TO DIXIE

By St. George Rathborne

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Begun in No. 22, June 3. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER X.

ADRIFT IN A NORTHER.

THE boys had come prepared to stay a week, and here twice that had passed before they could tear themselves away.

There was so much to keep Thad busy, and the planter planned so many little hunts and excursions for Maurice, time slipped past in a manner that seemed marvelous.

Maurice knew that they dared not linger longer, though the planter had suggested that they stay until a day or so of the time when Uncle Ambrose was expected in New Orleans, when they could speed thither on a train; but somehow the boys felt that, as they had started to reach the Crescent City by means of the great river, and the opportunity would doubtless never come their way again, they had better stick to their original contract; besides, they had numerous things on the little shanty-boat that they would not like to lose; and then there was Dixie, too, the little dog for whom they had begun to entertain a warm feeling.

So, on the whole they concluded to go back the way they had come, as a wagon was bound for the landing to take some hired hands away.

So much had happened to them while at the plantation that it seemed as though they were leaving a home when they said goodby to the family on the lawn in front of the big white veranda, about which the wisteria vines grew so luxuriantly.

"You must come again some time," said Mrs. Buckley warmly; "and write to us as often as you can. Your coming has been a delightful thing for all of us, and we'll miss you very much."

The last sound they heard as they drove away was the voice of little Major raised in what Maurice declared to be a real "rebel yell"—for he was kicking and struggling with his "mammy" nurse, declaring his resolution to accompany Marse," as he called the boy from the South.

They found everything all right at the boat.

Dixie was delighted to see them, and nearly dislocated his stump of a tail, so vigorously did he wag that member, as he jumped up and down and licked their hands; a dog never forgets a kind friend, no matter what time has elapsed since last seeing him; and this little cur had not known many good masters in his past.

That night they spent in a lagoon about five miles above Natchez.

Really, it was like old times to be aboard the shanty-boat again, and cooking their own supper; not that they had not enjoyed eating at the plantation, for it had been the best in their whole lives; but there was a sort of fascination about this gypsy existence that seemed to just suit their natures—Maurice declared they must have a good bit of the vagabond spirit in them from the numerous exclamations of delight both of them gave utterance to as they discussed the simple fare on that first occasion of sitting down to their own table.

Of course they had invested a fair portion of their wages in things they would need, such as tea, coffee, sugar, condensed milk, eggs, butter, bacon, grits, rice, and some other things; and then again, when they opened the package that had been put aboard by the overseer, at the express orders of Mr. Buckley to their delight they found it to contain a lovely home-cured ham as well as other things such as a couple of chickens.

"Say, we're just pigs in clover, that's what!" exclaimed Thad, as he bent over to smell of that sugar-cured ham, and allow a look of delicious anticipation to steal over his face.

"At any rate the question of supplies has been settled for all the time we'll be on the raging flood. After Uncle Ambrose comes there'll be no more need of our worrying," responded his mate.

That was the way it went—after Uncle Ambrose comes; just as if the captain of that tramp steamer might be a Santa Claus who was going to pile their stockings full of good things.

Perhaps he was—the indications strongly pointed that way, and Maurice had faith to believe him the genuine article, unadulterated.

When they had put Natchez behind them the boys believed they had entered upon the last leg of their long cruise, even if it did cover some of the most difficult parts of the trip; for the further they got down the river the greater the volume of water, and its attendant perils—at times it looked as though they were afloat upon an inland sea, and only that steady current gave indication of the fact that it was a river, with a constant flow toward the ocean.

For several days they had a hard time of it.

The banks were low and marshy, affording poor holding places, so that they frequently found themselves hard pushed as to how they might keep from being dragged down in that insatiable current during the hours of darkness.

But two wide-awake boys like these were not going to allow anything to daunt them while they had their wits about them, and each separate trouble was taken by the throat and throttled ere it could accomplish much harm.

On one occasion they came near having a disaster that had it taken place must have changed their plan of campaign entirely, since they would have been left without a vessel on which to continue their inland voyage.

As before, it happened during the prevalence of a storm, and when those wide waters chose to kick up and make a fuss as if positive darkness had surrounded them, for these things always seem doubly alarming when met in gloom.

"We've broken loose from our moorings, and the boat's spinning down the river in the midst of a howling gale!" cried Maurice, looking at his comrade aghast.

"What can we do?" gasped Thad, ready to attempt anything his chum suggested, but unable to think of a remedy under the excitement of the moment.

Fortunately Maurice managed to regain his good sense, and he knew that it was utterly impossible to stop the passage of the boat while this blackness rested over the scene.

"Wait until I see what time it is," he said, calmly; and his manner as well as his words gave Thad new confidence.

"In about an hour it will be daylight. Then we've just got to keep things running about that long. Bundle up here, and we'll go outside and see if it's possible to steer the boat in all this racket.

They shut Dixie in the cabin where he barked and whined incessantly, anxious to be with them; but there was always a chance that the little fellow might be carried away on a comber that broke over the boat, and so he was safe inside; besides, the situation was that desperate as to require the attention of both constantly, and they could not be

"Jim's boy for all the world!"

a little mite of a shanty-boat was like a cork upon a vast lake—they had been unfortunate in their selection of a stopping place that night, because none happened in sight between three in the afternoon and dark, so that it was a case of necessity that compelled them to hang out on an exposed spot, trusting to luck that a storm would not catch them there.

But it did.

And Thad humbly confessed that it came without consulting the weather in the least; for he gave no warning.

So furious did the wind and waves beat upon the little boat that there was constant danger of something giving way; and the boys "slept upon their arms," so to speak, all night, ready to jump up and get outdoors at the first warning of an impending catastrophe.

Still, they managed to hold their own until about an hour or so of dawn, when a gust of wind that must have been a breath of a hurricane struck the bow-end of the boat, coming directly from the north.

There was a loud snap, and the boat began to wobble up and down like a crazy thing, whirling around as if in a waltz; and like magic the buzzing sound of the howling gale seemed to cease, for they were now going with it!

Both boys sprang erect as if galvanized.

They had kept a lantern burning as a precaution, and it was not quite so bad bothered looking after a dog, no matter how much they cared for the little beast.

"Can you see the land?" shouted Maurice, as they stood there on the reeling deck, each holding on with one hand, and meaning to use the steering oar with the other once they got their bearings.

"It ought to be this way, but I don't seem to get a squint of anything," replied the other.

"You're wrong—it should be here. Never mind the position of the boat, for she's turning constantly. The wind is from the north and the water runs in this direction, which is south. There! I had a glimpse of a tree top against the dark sky. Put her over this way, Thad, for all you're worth!"

Both threw their weight on the sweep and began to madly push and pull, for the situation was worthy of their best efforts; once let the little craft drift out one hundred yards from shore and the chances were strongly against its ever being brought back again—a big wave would overturn it, and leave the poor navigators floundering in the wild sea of waters, probably to drown.

At first it seemed as though all their efforts had no more effect than to hold the boat from going further; though this was good it could not save them, as they must soon become exhausted at this rate, but presently Maurice shouted that he believed they were really gaining, as the

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trees seemed more distinct when he caught another glimpse of their tops.

Thus encouraged they worked wildly, and in the course of ten minutes during which they thought twice all was over as the boat careened on her side, only to right again, they had drawn in so close to the land that in the end they were enabled to take advantage of a bayou that suddenly opened up alongside, behind the shelter of which headland they found a snug harbor.

It took them hours to get rested after their frantic labors; indeed, Maurice, not quite so hardened to such things as his chum, actually felt the effects of that strain for a week; and as for the memory of that exciting hour it would never fade from his mind.

They were now in Louisiana indeed, having left the border of Mississippi two days back; and it seemed as though their haven was in sight, though many miles still lay between them and the Crescent City.

As there were two more weeks before the time the steamer was expected in port they did not mean to hurry, since it would cost more to stay in the city than on the shanty-boat, with no one to see and comment on their primitive methods of housekeeping.

Perhaps Maurice wondered what they would do should Uncle Maurice disappoint and fail to return to New Orleans; but he was not one to cross bridges before coming to them, and somehow he had such supreme faith in this relative that he would not allow himself to harbor a single doubt; at the worst both he and Thad were stout and able to work, so there should be no great difficulty in making a living.

On the fourth of February they reached Baton Rouge, with eleven days still to carry them to their destination—they were less than a hundred miles from New Orleans as the crow flies, but much more than that as the great river winds in and out; but it looked as though they ought to make it under a week.

So they shook hands over the successful outcome of their long voyage thus far, and prepared to enter upon the last lap of the course.

CHAPTER XI.
A LOUISIANA SWAMP.

A few days after this Maurice had an idea.

They were so far ahead of their time that it would not matter if they spent a day or two investigating something he had always wanted to see, and which up to this hour he had to be satisfied with fleeting glimpses of as they drifted past.

This was a genuine Louisiana swamp.

It was true that the opportunities would have been much more plentiful further up the river, before reaching Baton Rouge, for the land was now pretty much given up to rice, cotton and sugarcane; still, occasionally they passed a stretch of exceeding wild land, and as this happened about the middle of one afternoon Maurice found himself sorely tempted.

He put the case to his chum, and as Thad was always ready to take up with anything that promised excitement, with perhaps a tinge of danger, the question was speedily settled.

They would stay.

So Maurice eagerly kept watch for an opening whereby they might be put in touch with the spectacle they so earnestly wished to see.

"Here's a bayou opening up that looks promising. Look at that background with the trailing moss on the trees—seems to me as if that might cover the case!" he exclaimed, turning the shanty-boat closer toward the shore in order that if it were decided to take advantage of the find they would not have too much difficulty in making the cut.

"Just what we want!" cried Thad, seizing one of the poles and making such a savage sweep for the bottom in order to assist navigate the boat that he came within an ace of falling overboard; for the river proved to be very deep where he imagined it to be shallow; and only by dropping the pole and grasping hold of the gunwhale was he enabled to keep aboard the Tramp.

Maurice laughed at the comical figure his friend presented, and then recovered the setting pole before it could float away; for these things were really indispensable at times, and they could not afford to lose one.

Once out of the current it was easily managed, for the back water helped draw them into an eddy, that in turn floated them along the border of the swamp.

"Here, if we're going to penetrate into this dismal place at all we must first make sure of the way out. It would be a pretty tough experience if we got lost now, and overstayed our time, so that when we did get to the city it would be to find Uncle Ambrose had come and gone," exclaimed Maurice.

"Not that above all things. If you think there's any danger, perhaps we'd better not take the chances," declared Thad, nervously; for they had been building great hopes on the wonderful things this relative of Maurice was to do for them and even the mere suspicion that they might not materialize gave both lads a feeling of dismay.

"Oh! that's all right; we can fix it easy enough. See here, let's fasten this bit of cloth to this bush that hangs right out over the water. We can see that for quite a ways, and before its out of sight we'll fix another after the same fashion. These will give us a marked channel that nobody but a fool could miss," and he suited the action to his words.

"Great idea," commented Thad, looking pleased.

They spent about half an hour going in, and Maurice was positive they could get out in just as short a time when they were ready.

He did want very much to spend just one night in a genuine swamp, something he had never really visited, though he had heard much about their curious inhabitants, and was not unfamiliar with the discomforts one might expect to find there.

"How's this?" he asked, looking around at the gloomy spectacle; for the trees met overhead, and were so thickly draped with funereal Spanish moss that very little light streaked through, so that even at midday the place would have pretty much the appearance of twilight.

A tremendous splash followed his words, and turning quickly they saw the dark water violently agitated as though some large creature had taken a dive from the low bank.

"What under the sun was that?" exclaimed Thad.

"I just had the slightest peek at something as it went in, and couldn't say for sure, as I never saw one growing wild, but I think it was an alligator," replied the other, eagerly watching to see if any further developments occurred.

"What's that yonder on the water?" asked Thad in a hoarse whisper, pointing carefully as he spoke to what seemed very like a couple of pine-knots some ten inches apart, and which did not move.

"Say, do you know I really believe that's the identical chap, watching us to see who we are, and what we mean to do. I've read that when they come to the surface only their eyes stick out of the water, for they're located like a couple of bumps above the rest of the head, perhaps for that very purpose. Well, I'll soon settle the question—watch!"

Maurice threw something in the direction of the supposed pine-knots, and immediately they vanished, sinking out of sight before their very eyes.

"It was a 'gator!" exclaimed Thad, falling into the manner of speech of the natives when the saurians are under discussion; for they had heard more or less talk about the doings of these scaly reptiles ever since striking the lower Mississippi.

"Well, we've seen a 'gator, at any rate. Perhaps we'll have the pleasure of hearing one bellow before tomorrow morning. I'd just like to say I'd had that experience, for once," remarked Maurice.

If he had ever passed a night in a Florida swamp where the alligators were plentiful he would never express such a wish again during the whole course of his life; for there are times when they make sleep almost impossible, though as a rule their bellowing is fiercest toward peep of dawn.

The shanty-boat was securely warped to a couple of trees, and the dinky used to explore the immediate neighborhood; but they were careful never to lose sight of the home craft, for fear of becoming mixed in their bearings, and finding themselves lost in the swamp.

"Say, I'd hate to be drifting around in a place like this, without knowing in which direction 'out' lay. Generally a fellow can keep track of the points of the compass, but when you can't see the sky, and there don't seem to be any marks on the trees like the moss we have up north, how could you decide just where the old river lay?" demanded Thad, as they prowled around, poking into everything they came across, in search of information.

Maurice laughed and pulled something out of his pocket.

"Catch me wandering around in an unknown swamp without some way of getting out again, in case we did lose sight of the boat. Now, we chance to know the river's to the west of us, and this little boy will tell you where west is."

He held up a small compass which Thad had never seen before.

"You're the bright one; you're all to the good. Why, of course, to be sure; but who'd ever think of that thing but you? It never entered my head that we'd need a compass when we floated down the old Mississippi, for I thought all you had to do was to just keep on drifting until you came slap-bang up against New Orleans. I can see now how useful that would have been if we'd wandered into one of those tempting cut-offs above, and didn't know how to get out again. But, compass or no compass, if it's all the same to you count me out when it comes to getting lost in this awful hole. Ugh! there ain't a decent place to sleep, unless a fellow curled up on some of these twisters of roots that stick out of the water. What kind of trees are these, with the top-boot roots, Maurice? Seems to me I never met up with the species before."

"Cypress trees. These bent roots you speak of are mighty valuable things to the builder of small boats, as he gets most of the knees out of them," returned his comrade, readily enough.

"Oh! I see; then he needs them, eh? Well, it's getting rather dark here, and if so be you're willing I vote that we go back to our jolly old boat and sling together some grub."

"You're in a big hurry, my boy. It lacks more than an hour to our usual supper time. The gloom under these trees deceives one. What effect would it have on anybody to always live in this atmosphere? I'd think it would make them gloomy and ugly, never seeing the sun or meeting up with other people."

"Excuse me, if you please. A squint or two and I've had enough. One night will satisfy yours truly. But all the same I can see that a place like this would be a bully one to investigate for many queer things—for those who like that kind of work. It don't happen to be in my line though. There's the boat, thank goodness, and no floating around in that den of horrors all night for this crowd."

Even Maurice was well satisfied to climb aboard again, and have some firm footing under him.

As there was nothing else to do they lighted the lantern and then set about preparations for the evening meal.

Things seemed more cheery when the gloom was dissipated by even the feeble glow of the lantern; and after the odors of cooking began to ascend the boys

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forgot all about their recent shivery feeling while poking around the spooky place.

There was one open space where they could see the sky, and from the indications Maurice judged that it was sunset, for certain fleecy clouds began to assume a brilliant hue.

While he lay there on deck, cracking at the mosquitoes that began to make their appearance, and watching those bright clouds, he became aware of the fact that birds seemed to be passing over that opening, all heading one way, and that deeper into the swamp.

"Now, I've heard of that," he said to himself, sitting up to take notice; "and I reckon those are either cranes or herons making for some bird roost. But much as I'd like to see such a place nothing could tempt me to take the plunge into that unknown den of horrors. If I had a guide it would be different; but there's too much at stake just now to take chances. But it must be interesting."

He could presently distinguish the cranes from the herons, and several times another bird would fly along, or a group of the same, which Maurice, having some knowledge of the feathered inhabitants of these Southern morasses, decided must be white ibis.

Then the opening gradually closed as night crept on, and he was aroused from his meditations by hearing Thad beating on a tinpan, the usual call to supper.

"Say, there's skeeters in here all right," announced the cook, as he made a vigorous slap in the direction of his ear while occupied in eating.

"Oh! I found that out some time ago. We'll have to use that cheese cloth net I brought along, and be mighty glad we've got the same. I never was partial to the little pests, and they do like to gouge me so. They tell me that people who live all the year round in the South suffer very little; their blood becomes thin and the bites never swell up as they do with us. I think that must be pretty fine, for they do itch to beat the band," and Maurice rubbed his ear ruefully.

When supper had been finished and the things cleared up the boys sat out on the deck to listen to the sounds that arose from the neighboring swamp, many of them unfamiliar to their ears.

And for once Maurice was glad to cuddle up close to his chum while Thad puffed at his old pipe with the dignity of a drum major; for the tobacco smoke seemed to drive the pesky little insects away.

They talked of many things as they sat there—memories of the early days of the long cruise, and the adventures that had befallen them in the upper reaches of the river; and last though not least, the pleasant visit they had to the plantation of the genial Mr. Simon Buckley, together with the various things that had happened while they remained guests under his roof.

The night chanced to be somewhat warm so that the chorus of sounds emanating from the depths of the swamp was of pretty fair proportions—while they could place some of the sounds most of them were of a mysterious origin to them and Maurice gave up in despair trying to decide what could make such weird groanings and gruntings and squawkings.

But not once did they catch a sound after the bellow of a bull, which they had been told distinguished the roar of the alligator.

And finally they fixed their bunks with the mosquito net, crawled inside, and were soon lost to all earthly troubles and mysteries.

Thad was dreaming of something pleasant when he felt himself violently agitated as if some one were shaking him.

"Hey, what's doing?" he asked, only half awake, and unable to immediately understand where he was, or the conditions surrounding him.

"Listen, Thad!" said a voice which he recognized as that of his chum; and then it flashed over him where they had taken up their quarters for the night.

A tremulous and deep sound broke on Thad's ear, some distance away—it was like the roar of the surf beating on the ocean shore.

"Say, I heard that once when I half woke up; but I guess I must have thought it was you snoring, and went to sleep again. Is that bull 'gator using his bazoo? It ain't so very much after all, is it?" he remarked, and proceeded to settle down again for another nap.

After all Thad was a matter-of-fact chap, and did not allow anything to knock him out of his sleep or his regular meals.

Maurice lay awake a long time listening to the sonorous sounds and picturing in his mind's eye the big chap who gave utterance to the bellow as he lay on some sedgy bank and uttered his defiance.

Then he too went into the land of dreams.

When he awoke he felt that he had had enough sleep, yet to all appearances it was not time to get up; but remembering where they were he consulted his little nickel-watch and found that it was long after sun-up.

"Here, get up, lazy-bones—it's half past seven, and nothing done. We want to pull out of this during the morning; that is, unless you'd like to hang around for a week and investigate things more?" he cried, and Thad came tumbling out with a wild look on his face.

"Gee! I'm glad you woke me when you did. I was just dreaming that big 'gator crawled aboard here and was pulling me out of my bunk. He'd have got me sure if you hadn't scared him away when you shouted. Excuse me from staying here another night—not for Joseph. We beat it as soon as breakfast is over," he remarked, with an energetic shake of the head.

Maurice himself was just as willing to go, for he could not but feel more or less nervous about their getting to the big city ahead of time; something might happen to bring the steamer in before the date set, and hasten her departure; so it would seem that policy should dictate their making for their destination now with all ordinary speed.

The fever of the home-stretch was upon him, and once that seizes hold there is nothing that will do but giving in.

So when the deck was cleared they began to go back over the trail that had been made by the white pieces of cloth; it was very easy work, and more than once Thad loudly complimented his chum on his forethought in thus preparing for the return.

And when through the last of the swampy border they finally had a sight of the vast stretch of open water, flowing majestically southward, both of the boys raised a shout of joy.

It was as if they had been away from an old friend a very long time; such was the depression caused by the gloomy swamp, and the reaction that took place when they once more came into God's generous sunlight.

CHAPTER XII.
ROUND THE WORLD CRUISE.

Each passing day presented some new and attractive feature along the banks of the great river; and under other conditions Maurice would have been delighted to go ashore and witness the operation of grinding sugarcane, or baling cotton where the cotton gin worked; but these things would have to keep until another occasion, for destiny now beckoned to the two lads, and they felt that their fortunes were wrapped up in this anticipated meeting with the old sailor.

On the twelfth of February, at two in the afternoon they arrived at the upper stretch of the river metropolis, and from that time on they kept fully on the alert so as to avoid a collision with some passing boat.

At the same time they were also looking for a certain boatyard, to which they had been recommended by Mr. Buckley, who knew the proprietor well, and for whom a letter was reposing in the pocket of Maurice's coat.

Luckily this boatyard was near the upper part of the city, so that they did not have to pass along the entire water

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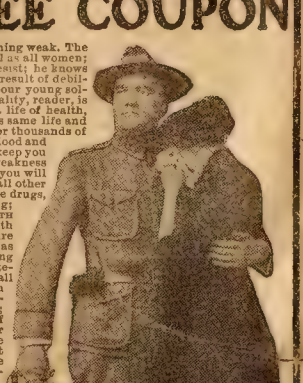

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front, in constant danger of a spill from the many vessels moving about, great tows of coal barges such as they had seen on the river many times, ocean steamers, ferry boats, sailboats and numerous other river craft propelled by steam, gasoline or sails.

The proprietor of the boatyard looked at them a bit suspiciously as they drew the ungainly craft that had served them as a home during the long cruise, into his "pocket;" but upon reading the letter Maurice presented his face changed in its expression and he shook hands with both lads heartily.

And thus early in their experience in the world our boys realized what a splendid thing it is at any and all times to have a friend at court, ready to speak a good word in one's favor.

They could tie up in the yard, and he would see to selling the boat for what it would bring—only a few dollars to be sure, but now that they had reached their destination it was no longer of any use to them.

And yet Maurice and his friend looked at the Tramp with regret in their eyes when they were saying good-by to the craft; for they had enjoyed many good times aboard the faithful little floating home since leaving the Indiana town, and would have many pleasant memories in the dim future to look back upon.

Mr. Buckley had insisted upon Maurice taking the little snapshot camera along with him when he departed, saying that he had ordered a larger and more expensive one, and that it was worth it to be shown how to develop and print in the clever manner Maurice had done.

So, as there was a roll of film in the camera, Maurice had used it in taking pictures of the boat and Dixie while they were floating downstream; and if these turned out well they would always have a reminder of their staunch craft, and the little yellow cur that had helped to brighten the voyage, now given over to the friendly boat builder, who had conceived a fancy for him.

But that night they spent in their old quarters, getting things in shape for a move in the morning, when they expected to find some boarding place where they could put up until the arrival of the Campertown.

It was one of the worst nights of the trip, for the sounds that came to them from the city streets were so strange to their ears that as Thad declared, they seemed to be near some boiler factory—of course this was mostly because they had been off by themselves for months, and the night meant a time of solemn silence save for the murmur of the wind through the trees or the splash of the waves upon the shore or against the side of the boat.

When day came both boys felt a bit rocky, having rested wretchedly; but after fixing up and sallying forth they found a restaurant where the demands of the inner man could be satisfied, and then things began to assume a brighter aspect in their eyes.

Maurice purchased a paper and looked up the nautical news to see whether the steamer of his uncle had arrived, or was spoken outside the mouth of the river.

To his delight he discovered that she was expected on the following morning, and during the day he and Thad found their way to the identical spot where the Campertown would be apt to lay up while releasing her cargo and taking on another.

They spent the better part of the day in seeing the city, now in holiday attire, for it was the last of the Mardi Gras festivities, as Lent was close at hand.

That night was a banner one to the two lads, who had never been in a great city before, and especially at a time when the whole population seemed to have given itself up to gaiety.

They spent the time upon the streets until past midnight, watching the floats go by in gorgeous procession, and mixing up with the festive maskers bent upon having all the fun possible, since tomorrow they must begin to mourn.

Thoroughly tired out our boys finally said good-by to these riotous sounds and hied away to the quiet house where they had a room; and once abed there was no need on this night to toss and turn, for they hardly hit the pillow before they lost all track of time, and were sound asleep.

Another dawn found them up and eager to get down to the river.

They could hardly wait to get their breakfast before putting out at full speed.

The steamer had come in during the night, and with emotions that would be indeed difficult to define they read the word "Campertown" upon her bow.

How big she looked to them—for they had never seen anything larger than a river steamboat until the preceding day; and to think that this palatial vessel (for such the tramp appeared in their eyes) might be their home for months, yes, years to come.

Maurice boldly asked for the captain, and was told that he was asleep, and on no condition could be seen until ten; so they had to content themselves with wandering around, and talking about what the chances were for success.

Thad was very nervous, for it must be understood that as yet good Uncle Ambrose did not even know that such a fellow existed on earth, and his future was, to say the least, uncertain.

The possibility of being separated by a cruel fate from this chum whom he loved so well was beginning to give Thad a heartache; and his hands trembled in spite of his smiling face, every time he looked at Maurice.

The time that elapsed until the hour of ten arrived was about as weary a stretch as either of our lads ever knew; indeed, Thad afterward declared that it was worse than on the occasion when they had to put in an hour of dreadful suspense in the cabin of the shanty-boat while the storm raged on the river, and it was doubtful whether they would ever see daylight again.

But finally the time came for them to go aboard, and mustering their courage to the fore they went up the gang plank.

A sailor directed them to the captain's room and here Maurice discovered a big man in a uniform whose bearded face had a kindly look, and who at his entrance jumped up, stared at him a couple of seconds and then pounced upon him like a great grizzly bear, grasping both his hands and roaring:

"Jim's boy for all the world—the very image of his dad as I remember him. I'm mighty glad to see you, Maurice, and at first sight I know we're going to get on fine together. And you've come down to go with old Uncle Ambrose to foreign ports, eh? That's great. I tell you this does me good, just to see you, lad. I've been getting kind of homesick lately—ought to have been ashamed of myself for not looking you up sooner, but a fellow who's in all parts of the world loses his grip on things sometimes; but never mind, I'm going to make up to you from now on. But who's the chap with you, son?"

That made the desired opening; so Thad was introduced as the finest fellow in all the world, and before Maurice knew it he had launched out on a narrative of their long cruise down the great river, in which Thad had borne himself as a true American boy should, always ready to take his turn at duty, never shirking peril or stress, and cooking the most delightful meals that anybody ever ate.

Captain Haddon's eyes gleamed with humor as he heard the virtues of the modest Thad thus extolled to the skies; he knew what was coming, but it pleased him to keep the boys on the anxious seat a while, for this was a very amusing happening for the old salt.

And then when they told how they had spent a week and more with his old bunky Simon Buckley, he was intensely interested; whereupon Maurice saw fit to bring out the letter of recommendation wherein the said Simon declared that Thad was certainly a good, conscientious carpenter, and he could wager his life he would never regret it if he saw fit to give the lad a chance on board his vessel.

Then the captain looked at Thad, sizing him up, from the crown of his head to his toes, after which he thrust out his hand and said heartily:

"Tip us your fin, Thad, my lad. It would be a cruelty to separate two such good shanty-boat mates as you. I'll find something for you to do aboard, and by thunder you'll see the world together. That cruise was immense, and I'd have enjoyed nothing better myself than to have been along with you. I expect to hear many a yarn concerning those happenings as we sail across the big pond; for our next port call is going to be Liverpool, where we take on a cargo for Australia, and then to Japan, so you see before you're a year older both of you may have gone almost around the world; for we're likely to bring up at 'Frisco. Thad, consider that you're as good as booked for the trip. And now go about your business for a time. Here, Maurice, take this little amount for expenses, and I'll be down on board by evening. Tomorrow I'll start you in at your work under my present man, who is quitting us by the time we leave Orleans."

Maurice could hardly find words to thank him, and Thad was in the same boat; but then the old sea-dog understood boys, and he knew just how they felt, so that each of them shook hands with him and looked mutely in his face he only grinned and nodded and said:

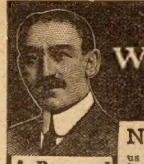
"I know all about it, lads, how you feel. But you've made me happier than you are yourselves. I was beginning to get into a rut, and seemed to have nothing to live for. The sight of you, my boy, has made me ten years younger. Run along now, and don't get into any mischief; but I can see with one eye that neither of you have any use for grog, and there's little chance for trouble when that is avoided."

They went ashore with light hearts; indeed, it seemed as though they must be treading on air, and they could hardly refrain from hugging each other, the world looked so bright in their eyes.

It was a ten dollar bill the rugged old captain had thrust into the hand of Maurice; and one of the first things he did was to go to a photographer and have some prints made of the films exposed during the latter part of the voyage; for already he was feeling some signs of homesickness in connection with the poor old Tramp, and desirous of showing his uncle what a "bully old floater" she was, as Thad said.

What they did not do the balance of

(Continued on page eighteen)



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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

HE'S SO INDUSTRIOUS.

Our Jimmie's up at early dawn,
And with amaze we watch him run
To drive the mower o'er the lawn—
He seems to find it splendid fun!
He's ready now for any task,
It seems there's none he won't essay;
We are not forced to ask and ask,
As oft we did but yesterday.

Now if there comes a sudden need
For some one to go to the store,
We find no cause to beg and plead,
Our Jimmie volunteers—and more.
He seems to take a great delight
In running errands any time;
His only comment is: "All right—
Say, pa, I wisht I had a dime!"

And so of course I know that he
Is glad to labor long and hard,
Because he knows there'll surely be
Some little chance of a reward.
His cash he carefully puts by,
But not to purchase bail or bat;
June's going fast, the Fourth draws nigh,
And Jimmie's saving up for that!

John's Decision.

John Miles lived all his ten years of life in New York without getting hit by an automobile, but then he became careless and in the next year he was run over by a motor truck. He was crushed a bit and much bruised, and some of his bones were broken. It takes more than an automobile to kill the ordinary boy, and so John recovered after he had been in the hospital some time, and then he started a suit for damages against the owner of the truck that had hurt him. The case dragged along, but last week the decision came. John received an award of $5,000. Now, John was quite happy at hearing this, but his happiness did not make him forget he had manners, and so he thanked the judge and then he went over to the jury box and thanked the jurors. One of them asked him what he was going to do with the money that he had got for being run over by an automobile.

John thought a moment.

"Well," he said, slowly, "I guess I'll buy an automobile with it."

HOPE FOR DRUG ADDICTS?

Free Distribution of a Successful Remedy Has Done Untold Good.

NEW YORK, June 15.—It is estimated that within a comparatively short time nearly three thousand persons, addicted to the use of opium or morphine in some form, have taken advantage of the offer of the Waterman Institute, 124 East 25th street, Branch 94, New York, to send a free trial supply of a truly remarkable home remedy for these insidious and dangerous habits. The expressions of satisfaction derived from the continued use of the remedy are practically unanimous. It is said that the free distribution will be continued for a time.

A Lack.

It is well that people do not like the wings of chicken so well as the rest of the meat, because if wings were the choice part then somebody would be disappointed when a certain chicken in Georgia is cooked and eaten. The chicken is one owned by a farmer who lives near Dublin in Georgia, and it has only one wing. It was born that way, and not a sign of a wing bone is to be seen on the left side. Otherwise it is not different from other chickens.

Free Asthma and Hay Fever Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Building, St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for Asthma and Hay Fever in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to anyone who will write for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

A Queer Paper.

There is said to be published in a European country a weekly illustrated comic paper that is printed on cloth. It is printed with ink that can be dissolved in water, and so when the reader has finished with it he can wash off the ink and have left a perfectly good handkerchief.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and raddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Fox 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Joe and the Crab.

Once there was a crab who was angry clean through, but as crabs are flat creatures that is not so angry as you might think. He was angry because a little boy—a little boy with red hair—had caught him under a shiny blue pail on the seashore. The crab made up his mind that as soon as he got out from underneath the pail he would be revenged. It happened that the tide was coming in. In a little while a particularly inquisitive wave slipped up the beach and overturned the pail to see what was beneath and when it saw the angry crab it slipped back again in a hurry. When the crab found himself free he started off down the beach with more haste than dignity and it was not long before he discovered the little boy with red hair who had provided a house for him.

The little boy's name was Joe and he was really a nice little boy and had not intended to make a lifelong enemy when he had put the crab under the pail—or rather the pail over the crab, which is the safer method to use if you wish to do this sort of thing. Pretty soon Joe looked down and saw the large and angry crab walking straight, or rather, sideways, toward him down the beach. Joe moved a little out of the way and was astonished to see the crab change his direction and come toward him again. Then Joe went around behind the crab and the crab at once turned and went for him again. They kept on changing about

Fairy Joe—Gee! but you are late this morning!
Tree Top Tim—Yes, indeed; that woodpecker who raps on my door to wake me up has sprained his bill and couldn't come around.

like this for quite a while, until Joe finally became quite nervous and decided to go home.

He ran all the way home and was having a good time playing on the lawn in front of his house, when all at once he looked up and saw the crab coming toward him across the lawn. Joe went up on the piazza, but the crab even followed him there, climbing the steps with astonishing agility. Then Joe went into the house and shut the door, but he forgot to shut the windows, and before long the crab came tumbling in at a window. After that Joe went upstairs and the crab followed step by step. Joe was about to lock himself in his room when he thought of a better plan. He decided that it would not be pleasant to have an angry crab in the house and not know just where it was; so he left the door of his room open, and when the crab came in Joe went out at the window behind him. Then he went in at another window, ran around to his room again and shut the door before the crab knew what was happening.

Now, as you have already heard, a crab that is angry clean through is really not overly angry, and this crab soon found his anger melting away. He was a good deal annoyed because he wished to be angry, especially as Joe had shut him in for the second time that day.

Pretty soon Joe began to wonder where he would sleep that night and he made up his mind to pacify the crab. So he took a nice, covered basket, put a cake inside and called through the keyhole of his door, "I say, Mr. Crab, I'll take you back to the beach if you'll jump in this basket. It will save you a long walk!"

Now, the crab had just been thinking about that walk, and when Joe opened the door and ran away he obligingly crawled out and into the basket—which was rather a crawl after the way he had acted at first. When Joe ventured back he closed the cover and took the basket down to the beach as fast as he could, and by the time they reached the beach the crab was so amiable that he tried to shake hands with Joe—and, do you know, Joe actually refused to do it, which only shows how much more forgiving crabs are than boys, as the crab remarked to his family when he was at home once more under the sea.

Finding Gold.

All the stories of the West are not yet told in the books of adventure. One was told by an old man named Moore, who has been for many years a miner and prospector on the Pacific coast. He came back to civilization recently and told what he had found a few days before in the Powder River Mountains, up in the northeast corner of Oregon.

The old man was looking for gold. Other men have wandered through the country on the same mission, but few persons live there. It is almost as it was when none except Indians ever came that way. The old prospector hunted about in the mountains, peering in the places where he thought gold was most likely to be found, and he made his way into a little opening in the rocks. It was a cleft that had been partly filled by rock slides. No one would have noticed it ten yards away. The prospector looked about the place but saw nothing of interest and was about to turn away, when a gleam of white caught his eye. He climbed over the fallen rock, and there before him was the opening of a black tunnel and in the opening the bleached bones of a human skeleton.

White bones are not enough to frighten gold seekers. The old man ventured into the tunnel, which was of natural formation, and there he found two more skeletons. All three skulls were crushed in as if they had been hit with a heavy instrument, perhaps a club wielded by an Indian. Beside one of the skeletons was a bottle containing pieces of rock that the old man knew held gold, and in a heavy dish were flakes of gold that had been pounded out of the rock. He examined the wall of the tunnel and found a vein of gold-bearing rock. At the end of the tunnel was a great cave.

There is a story for boys to read. It is such a story as they do read, except that in fiction the one that finds the treasure place is a boy and not an old man. The other great difference is that this story is true.

Tot Humor.

Tommy, aged 5, had met with an accident and his mother was afraid there would be a permanent scar on his lip.

"Don't worry mamma," said Tommy, "my mustache will cover it."

"Papa," said small Harold, "do you know the greatest bet ever made?"

"No, Harold," replied the father. "Can you tell me?"

"Sure," answered the little fellow. "The alpha-bet."

"Pa says you keep most everything here," said a small son of the village editor.

"I guess your pa's about right," repied the owner of the general store.

"And pa says," continued the little chap, "the reason you keep so many things is because you don't advertise."

The House Boat Boys.

(Continued from page seventeen.)

the day would be easier to tell than any attempt to describe the many things they saw and experienced; but taken in all it was a red letter time, never to be forgotten.

The future beckoned with enticing fingers, and the horizon looked red with the glowing promise of hope; but at the same time as they glanced backward they would always have tender feelings for every memory connected with that river trip, and the shanty-boat on which the voyage had been made.

The end.

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Madeline Dare's Vengeance.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

"No, at all."

As the stranger spoke he stepped from the shadow directly beneath the brilliant cluster of electric lights.

"Look now," he said with a certain grim definiteness.

Slowly the face of Cyril Dare began to pale. His questioning eyes grew to recognition, then to startled wonder, and then to—fear.

"You!" he gasped, catching at a chair for support.

"Yes, it is I—Wade Raycroft, a name for your ears and for no others, any more than your name—"

"Stop! don't speak it!" commanded Dare sternly. "You are a bold man, a venturesome man to appear here, now, before me, of all others."

"Why?" coolly challenged the stranger.

"Have you the hardihood to ask?" questioned Dare. "You ruined my life you broke the heart of my sister. Man, if hope, ambition, resentment were not dead in my soul, I would slay you where you stand!"

"Drop the resentment part of it, Barton Rivers, or Cecil Dare, as you now call yourself," sneered the intruder. "Nothing can come of it. I have my hand in my pocket, and the index finger presses the trigger of an automatic pistol. I will kill, if I have to. I am here for a purpose. Shall I tell you what it is?"

"Speak," said Dare, sinking to a chair, his head drooping upon his breast.

"It is true that I deserted your sister," acknowledged Raycroft. "It is also true that I left you to bear the shame and penalty of my own crime, but that is all past now. I return to this country to find you wealthy, a respected business man masquerading under a new name. For a month I have been looking you up. I have the chain complete of your escape from prison, of your subsequent career. I find that you are about to marry a wealthy heiress. You, up at the top of affluence, I in the gutter of penury, you must buy my silence or you do not marry the heiress, and you do go back to penal servitude."

"And you want?" inquired Dare, in a dreary spiritless tone.

"Fifty thousand dollars."

"And then?"

"I leave the country, never to return, and your secret is safe."

"Those are your terms?"

"Those only."

"Very well," said Dare in a strained, emotionless tone, "you shall have your answer next Monday at this same hour, in this same room."

"No——now," insisted Raycroft.

"Be careful!" warned Dare in determined tones. "Let me tell you something. I have no wish to marry the heiress you speak of. I care so little for life, that if you press me too hard I will go to the police, tell all, and resume the garb of a convict. Go."

"Monday, then, I shall be here," muttered Raycroft, with a scowl of defeat and menace.

For the next two hours Cyril Dare acted like a man in a dream. In a dazed sort of a way he made his evening toilet, called an automobile, and was driven to a railway station.

As he passed to and fro on the depot platform, he fancied he saw a man in the dim distance resembling his recent visitor. Dare simply turned his back on the suspicion, as though careless, reckless of anything.

As he got aboard the train a woman deeply veiled took a seat near him. Dare smiled grimly, bitterly. The woman suggested mystery, a detective on his trail. He sat staring indifferently out of the car window until Rockside was reached.

There was a deep ravine through which rushed a swift stream. Lining it, Dare proceeded in the direction of the Vermilyea mansion.

"Nothing matters now," he said—"I care not how it all ends."

He had just passed two happy lovers seated on a rustic bench, shadowed by a tree from the bright moonlight.

A railing protected a particularly dangerous part of the path. He was lining it when a low but distinct voice spoke the stern mandate:

"Stop!"

A veiled woman confronted him as he turned. In her hand she carried a revolver.

"I am going to kill you," she said simply.

"Woman, who are you?" demanded Dare, starting back.

"Look!" and Madeline Dare stood revealed.

"Oh—"

Backing away from her, as though confronted by a wraith, Cyril Dare reeled against the frail railing protecting the ravine path.

Crash!

A sharp report rang out.

"The Unwritten Law!" pronounced Madeline Dare solemnly.

The man swung sideways. The railing carried with him, he went over the edge of the path to dark, cavernous depths far below.

(Continued next week.)

A young man never makes a strenuous effort to entertain a girl who is engaged.

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7041—Girl's One-Piece Bloomers with Under Body, 4 to 12 years. For a girl 8 years of age will be required 1⅞ yards of material 27 or 36 inches wide for the bloomers; ½ yard 36 inches wide for the under body.

7067—Girl's Short Coat, 10, 12 and 14 years. For a girl of 12 years of age will be required 3⅝ yards of material 27, 2 yards 36 or 1⅝ yards 44 inches wide with ¾ yard 27 inches wide for collar and sleeve trimming.

7062—Tucked Negligee, 34 to 42 bust. For the medium size will be required 2⅝ yards of material 27, 2¼ yards 36 or 1⅝ yards 44 inches wide, with 6½ yards of banding and 10 yards of ruffling.

7050—Long or Short Kimono, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust. For a woman of medium size the long kimono will require 8 yards of material 27 inches wide, 5⅝ yards 36 or 5¼ yards 44, with 1¾ yards of any width or 6 yards of ribbon 6 inches wide for the bands. For the short kimono will be needed 3½ yards 27, 2¾ yards 36 or 2¾ yards 44 inches wide.

7031—Boy's Suit, 2, 4 and 6 years. For a boy 4 years of age will be required 3¼ yards of material 27, 2½ yards 36 or 2 yards 44 inches wide.

7033—Fancy Waist, 34 to 42 bust. 6999—Straight Plaited Skirt, 22 to 32 waist. For a woman of medium size the blouse will require 3 yards of material 27, 2¼ yards 36 or 1⅞ yards 44 inches wide with 5⅝ yards of wide and 3¾ yards of narrow banding; for the skirt will be needed 5½ yards 27, 4 yards 36 or 2⅝ yards 44 inches wide, with 14 yards of banding.

7064—Semi-Princesse Slip in Empire Style, 34 to 42 bust. For a woman of medium size will be required 4¼ yards of material 36, 3¾ yards 44 inches wide with 2¾ yards of embroidery 13 inches wide or ⅝ yard of additional material 36 or 44 inches wide for the flounce, 3¼ yards of edging and 3½ yards of beading.

7022—Girl's Dress, 8, 10 and 12 years. For the 10-year-size will be required 2¾ yards of material 27 or 36 inches wide, 2¼ yards 44, with ⅞ yard 36 inches wide for the bolero portions and 1¼ yards of banding.

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